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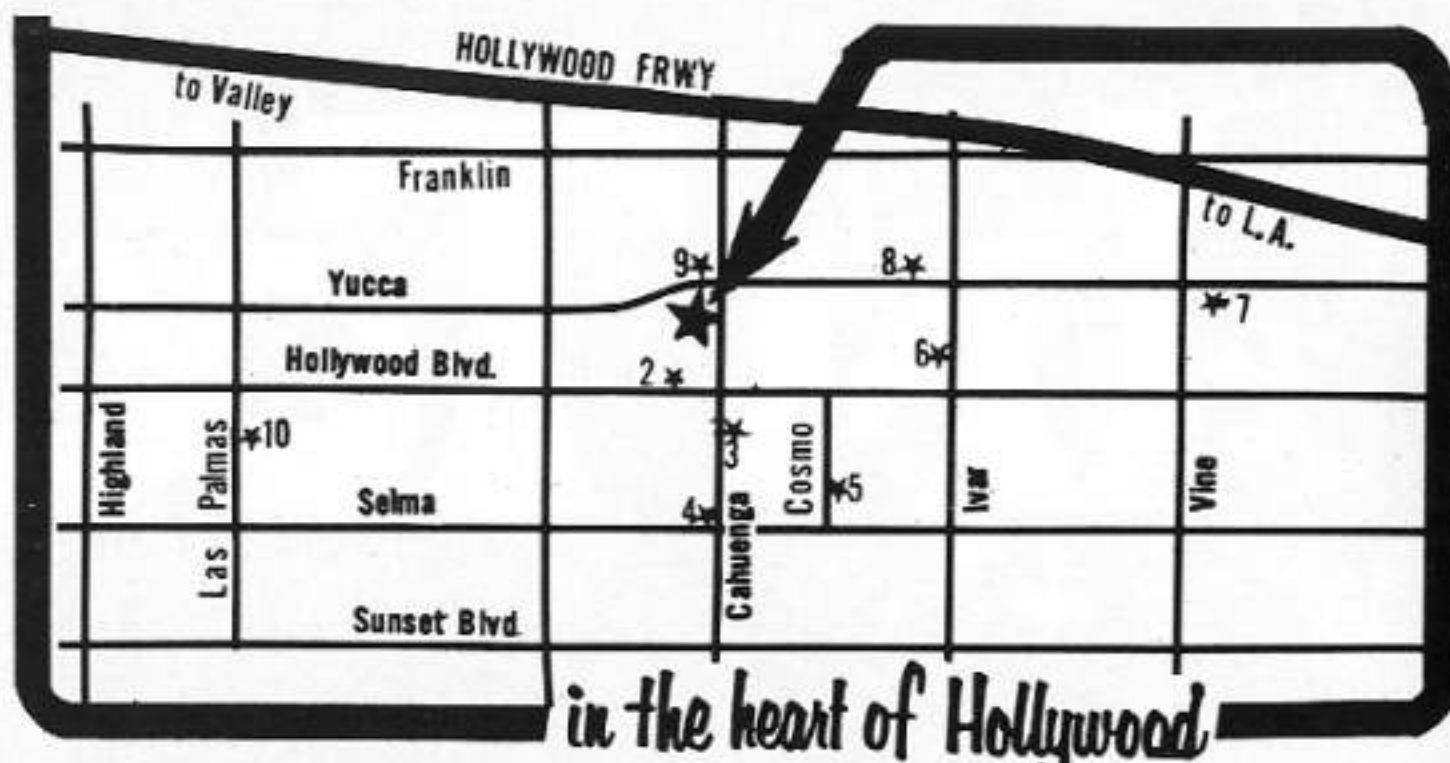
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IN TOUCH

celebrating gay awareness

vol. 2, no. 1

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THE COVER: A color celebration of our Anniversary features actor Marc Singer (page 14). Photo by James Armstrong.

This Page: Michael Cohen and Steven Grossman (page 22); Chuck Harling and Rick Lewis (page 30); Terrence McNally (page 34); Che McCaskill, Belle and Dwight Freeman (page 38); and Dennis Coats (page 46).

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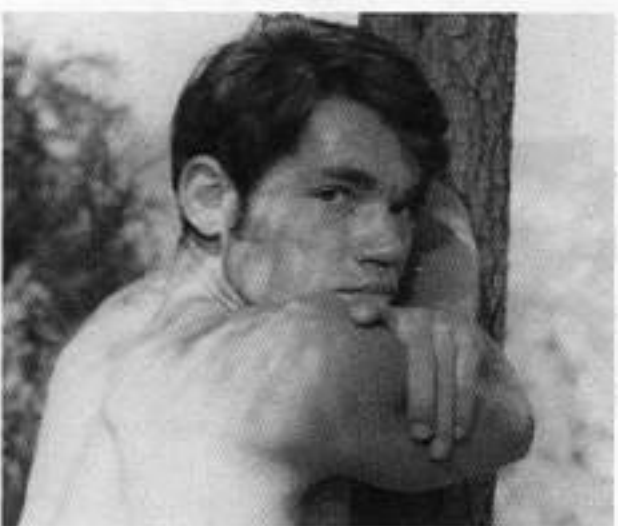
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keeping *IN TOUCH*

Gentlemen:

It's high time I took the opportunity to have my say about your fine publication. Must say it is the only gay publication I have ever subscribed to. Must admit, when it appeared last fall, I didn't pay much attention as the market is glutted with so many magazines of all kinds. Finally, in March, a straight friend saw a copy and decided to give it to me. I was pleased and delighted, and decided to try a six-month subscription. As others have said, it is discreet, tasteful, enlightening.

While awaiting my own first issue, I purchased a copy for April, and found it full of good things—Mae West, Curtis Harrington, and the delightful David. May was even better! Thanks for the fine piece on Roy Dean, a genius in his field, of whom I've been a fan since I saw his *A Time in Eden*. The Community Leader feature is one of your best; especially the ones on John Rechy, Harrington, and Dean, then Oliver and Ierardi. Keep 'em coming! Also, kudos

for fashion, films, books, and records—you really cover the spectrum in fine style. The fashion layout is always a treat, and always has at least one model who makes it difficult to concentrate on the fashion!

Being a film buff from way back, I always have an eye on your fine reviews, and the May column on music from film (Bette, Bogey, Warner Brothers and the great old MGM musicals) was a real bonanza.

Also, as luck would have it, I had just seen the *Kung Fu* episode featuring Don Johnson, when your feature on him arrived. Thanks for another great article on a great guy. A dream! And, speaking of dreams, Ron Fraser is a really groovy discovery—a beauty! (Just sorry I missed Bruce Morgan in January!)

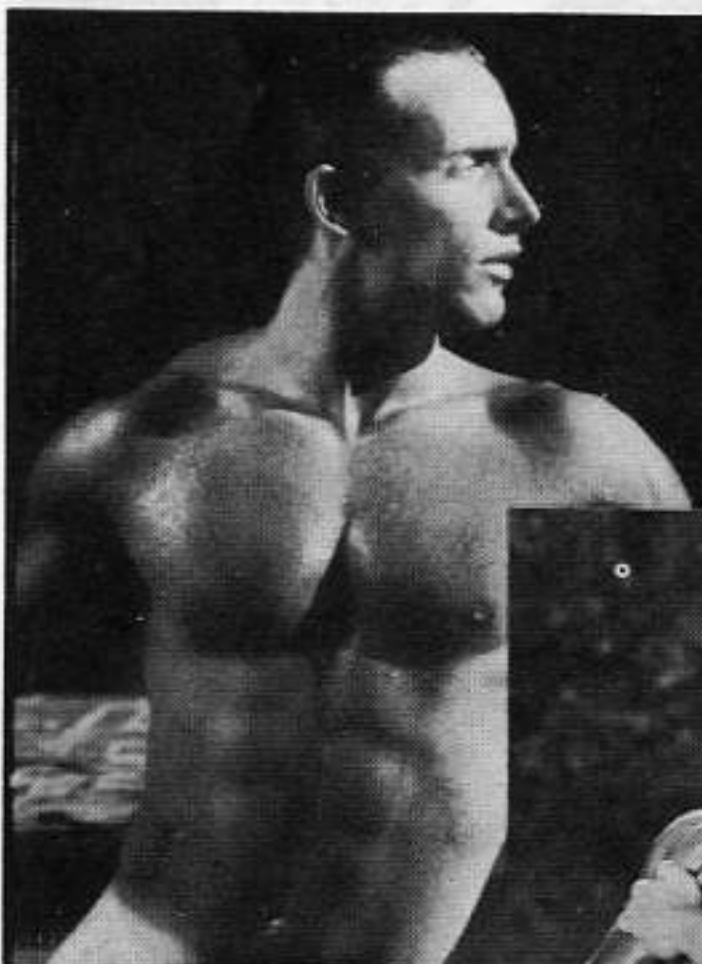
I must commend your excellent staff—Kepner, Dean, Harrison, Leopold, Marvin, Minton, Pedersen, et al. And your great photographers—Chase, Harrison, Lawrence, McGinnis and the rest. A sterling group for a sterling publication!

It's great, that, at last, we have a publication of taste and class we can be proud of, and which offers a forum for our thoughts, ideas, and ideals. One which does such a tremendous job in presenting us with all the latest on books, films, theatre, while informing and enlightening us on the contemporary personalities who are contributing something of value and worth to us, our society, and the world in general.

I say "Bravo!" for IN TOUCH. Keep it up, and much success now and in your long, long future.

A sincere reader and big fan,
Bill Chase

P.S. Decided to take an issue of IN TOUCH to my nearby barbershop, located at the local university campus. Needless to say, it was a hit! It now takes its place beside *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Playgirl*, as an interesting and informative new addition to the current social scene of manners, morals, and mores of contemporary man. Thank God, we are seeing a breakthrough for behavior once hidden in the dark. It's due to publications like IN TOUCH that someone finally put a light in the closet. Viva, IN TOUCH!



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IN TOUCH comments

Dr. Franklin P. Kameny, former government astronomer and chief antagonist of the government's far-flung security clearance system, was in Los Angeles recently for a week-long public hearing (the first such in history) in the case of Otis Francis Tabler, Jr., of Rancho Palos Verdes, an admittedly gay computer scientist.

The government has long maintained that because of the secrecy in which they are forced to live, homosexuals are sitting ducks for potential blackmailers and Russian agents, and therefore ought not be entrusted with any government secrets. In a series of cases which he, a non-lawyer, has pushed with amazing aggressiveness, Dr. Kameny with some help from the Washington, D.C., American Civil Liberties Union, of which he is an officer, has backed the government down on several points. He has increasingly argued (winning a couple lately) that persons who publicly admit their homosexuality have nothing to hide and

are therefore not subject to blackmail. The government then leaped to the peculiar argument that their very openness would attract subversives and blackmailers like bees to honey, but in the main, the government has fallen back on arguments that homosexuality per se evidenced undependability and bad character, supporting that contention by noting that homosexual acts are illegal in most states.

Tabler made an excellent appearance, stating that he had deliberately admitted his homosexuality in order to challenge the discriminatory system. He was accompanied by three others whose cases Kameny had handled recently.

Kameny argued, presenting expert witnesses including government security investigators, that by going out of its way to identify and exclude probable homosexuals, the government made itself the chief blackmailer; that about 150 Gays a year are denied clearances in Southern California alone, that there is

generally accepted evidence that the same laws under which homosexuals are often prosecuted are broken by an overwhelming percent of the heterosexual population, married people included.

The security investigators testified that they'd found nothing against Tabler in the evidence, other than his long-admitted homosexuality, and that they had recommended he be cleared. Air Force officials who'd worked with him for several years as well as his employer, testified that they'd known of his gayness and didn't see that it affected his competence or reliability.

I personally quailed at the extreme venom and the highly alliterative rhetoric of Dr. Kameny's opening statement—almost forgetting who was Goliath here, and who li'l David. I felt sorry for the chagrined hearing officer (who probably had never been attacked so slashingly before) and the amiably bumbling government counsel—but how polite ought one be with men who callously ruin the lives of hundreds of Gays (and countless others) each year in the name of a misbegotten and outworn program for allegedly protecting national interests?

Radical Gays sometimes attack Kameny for wanting Gays to have the right to work in government jobs or anywhere else. The government is corrupt and oppressive, they say, and it's hard to argue with that. But the same job discrimination standards extend not only to armed services and security jobs, but to the top professions and to licensed jobs from teaching to hairdressing.

Most Gays, when denied a clearance, have accepted the income cut and run away to nurse their wounds. But these cases can now be won, if pursued with sufficient vigor. Neither Kameny, who can be reached at (202) 362-2211 nor Tabler at (213) 541-6903 have any income for or from this fight, but they welcome any victim of such discrimination who wants to fight it through to contact them. Even a moderate increase in the caseload would bring the creaking system to a fast halt.

It was such a short time ago that any such fight would have been unthinkable, and any person fighting to retain a job would at all costs try to keep the fight behind the scenes where there would be no publicity whatever. All that has changed.

—JIM KEPNER

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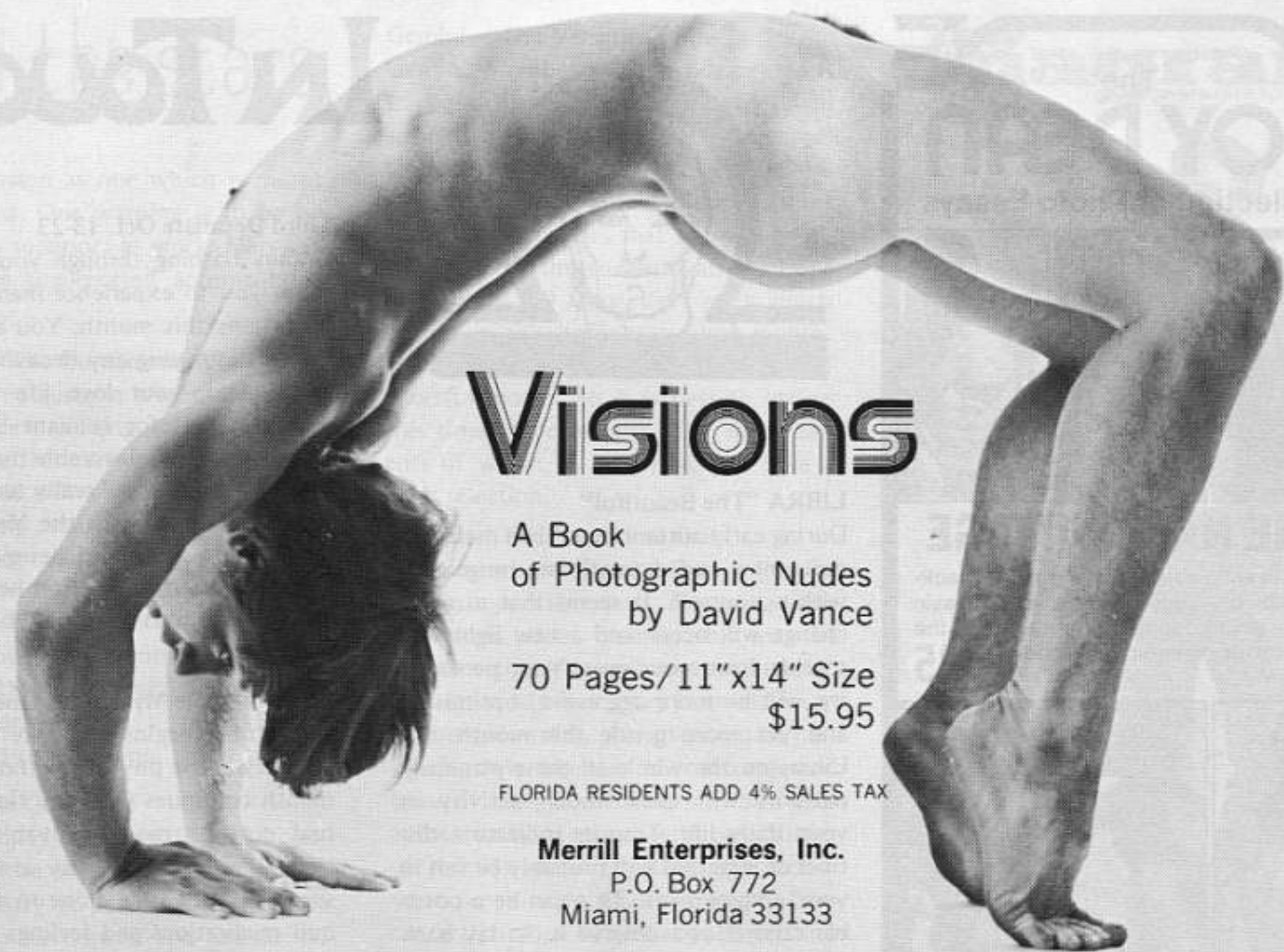
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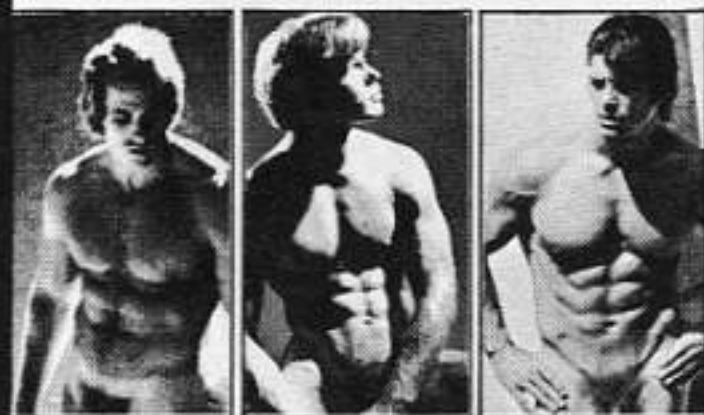
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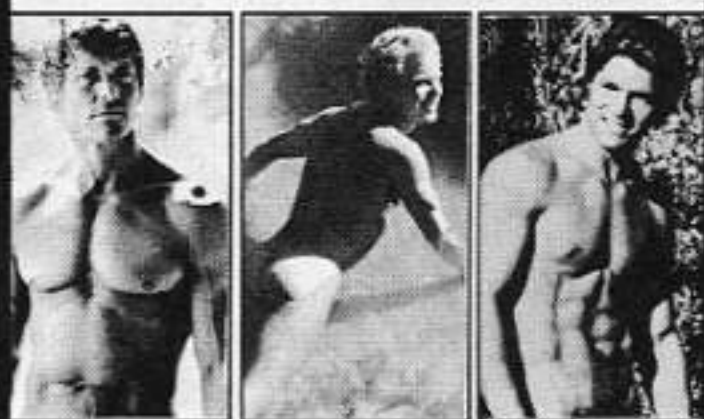
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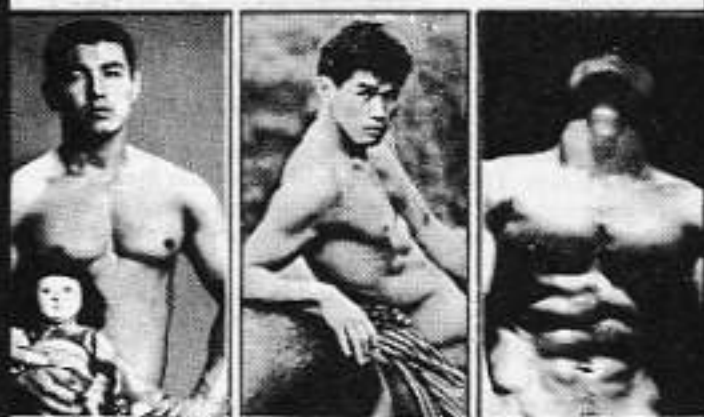
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LIBRA "The Beautiful"

During early autumn, you'll be making a quite new and dramatic rearrangement within yourself. It seems that a major change will occur and a new light will sparkle from your eyes. Your personality will be more aggressive, optimistic, and yet more gentle this month. So, Libra, on the whole all these planetary patterns will cause much activity in your daily life. Transits indicate a distinct change that will probably be felt in your employment. This can be a possible raise if you deserve it, so lay back and absorb all these new events in your life.

First Decanate Sept. 23-Oct. 3

Now, Libra, at the present you may notice your personality taking on a new image! Pluto hovering over your sun can eliminate past and dull patterns, causing a whole new life to unfold before you. However, with Mars in your sign, you must guard against sudden arguments. Though you will be feeling stronger and more optimistic now, try to use these qualities to better yourself. Be the peacemaker you are meant to be.

Second Decanate Oct. 3-13

Fiery Mars and gentle Venus will strongly mark distinct impressions on your reactions this month. You will be flying with extra energy and confidence, making a gigantic swing toward a sudden improvement in your social life. Venus may bring you a guy which can start an exhilarating love affair. However, Saturn making strong aspects to your sun can cause you to become more serious. Desires to form more life-lasting relationships may be your goal now. Other planetary patterns also indicate that your love life will definitely take on new enchanting moods, coloring your days softly for the future.

In Touch

Third Decanate Oct. 13-23

Uranus flashing through your sign can cause you to experience many new exhilarations this month. You are sure to find it destroying any decaying life patterns. Also, your love life has many strong aspects for brilliant beginnings. Chances are very favorable that you will meet a man that will really turn you on. However, Libra, with the Mars transit, guard the tendency of being too blunt at the present time. For best results, Libra, remember to think before you speak!

Scorpio—"The Mysterious One"

As October begins you may find yourself very active physically, though as the month continues you may find intellectual pursuits more enjoyable. At this time, however, you may also wish to spend a lot of time alone to enjoy tranquil meditations and feelings with your lover by your side. Scorpios may find bar-hopping very boring during this period, so use this time wisely and develop your creative and intellectual talents.

Sagittarius—"The Optimist"

During the month of October you will find a sudden upturn in your social life. You will probably meet many new and unique friends, with much partying. There may be much concern about a certain friendship. The Mars transit can cause some rather heavy problems, so try to maintain a peaceful attitude. However, with Venus aspects to your sun, there are great possibilities of meeting someone special that will make quite an impression on you. There are good chances of making this a lasting relationship if you just relax and take the time to really get to know him.

Capricorn—"The Ambitious Goat"

At this time with many of the planets in Libra you will experience a sensation and an extra boost of energy which will bring happiness in the days to follow. There are possibilities that you may have a complete change in your profession. These changes may seem inconvenient at first; however, they will bring many beneficial and new circumstances in your life. So accept any change in

with the stars

your profession as one which is meant for the best. One warning is to be on guard with superiors at work. Mars can cause some unexpected arguments at this time.

Aquarius—"The Humanitarian"

Aquarius, the autumn breezes will bring you some new exciting experiences now making you feel as if you are floating in the air. This will be quite a refreshing month. Many Aquarians will find themselves taking some extra educational courses. The aspects that Venus and Mars make to your sun will make your love life flow very smoothly, and if you are single, this is the right time to meet a rather charming guy . . . so relax, and let the good come to you.

Pisces—"The Quiet One"

This month, Pisces, your financial conditions will be of prime importance to you. You may be receiving extra from people who have owed you past debts. However, Pisces, this is not the best time to borrow or lend any money. If some minor financial problems arise, you will still be able to maintain an optimistic attitude. Jupiter over your sun will help to smooth any matters.

Aries—"The Adventurous Ram"

A dynamic month is in store for most Arians. It seems the fireworks will definitely roar tremendously in your life at the present time, especially with relationships between lovers or roommates. The planetary aspects will have a strange effect, both good and bad, on your love life. It will definitely take on a new light. There are strong possibilities that if you are single, it will not be for long. So, be prepared, Aries! For a new romance will certainly take you off to another galaxy.

Taurus—"The Gentle Bull"

During autumn the indications show change in employment and also working conditions. You may be spending more time on your job, so watch your health, Taurus. Your friends will definitely be beneficial at this time. It seems they will be helping you with any minor problems. Over-activity can make you more tense than usual, so try to control your anxieties.

Gemini—"The Versatile Twins"

Gemini, October will be advantageous to your plans. Creative activities will strongly appeal to you with strong urges to develop your talents. If you are single, there are many favorable indications from Venus in Mars that you will be involved in exciting romantic affairs. Love will surely fill your days with much beauty in this brilliant autumn month. On the whole this will be a peaceful and cheerful month, so it is best to utilize this time in developing your many talents of which, as a Gemini, you have a great selection.

Cancer—"The Emotional Crab"

Your home and surroundings will be of prime importance now. If you had any intentions about moving, this may be the time that you will take the immediate action to break away from old foundations. However, you may also be purchasing new furniture to redecorate and beautify your home. This may be a wild and electrifying month with possibilities of meeting some guy that may arouse your sensitive feelings. However, Cancer, watch your temper as you may find your emotions boiling to a peak. Just keep cool, and all will work out according to plan.

Leo—"The Proud Lion"

This will probably be a serene month in which you may find yourself reading and spending more time in intellectual pursuits. For the Leo this is the best time for tidying up old correspondence. If you also have been delaying a short trip, this is a good time to travel. Be extra careful of being too sarcastic now, because Mercury squared to your sun may set you to mischief. Watch the mailbox because you may find some pleasant surprises.

Virgo—"The Natural"

Hey, Virgo! This month you will really be keeping an eye on your pocketbook. The planetary patterns indicate that you will be thinking and concentrating much about your financial conditions, but not all is gloomy. There are very good chances that you will get a raise to brighten your days ahead, however, you may find yourself spending much more cash on small luxuries or artistic objects. If you are involved in a relationship, you may find more strength and understanding.

—DONN DEMIAN

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CASS ELLIOT DEAD OF HEART ATTACK

That heading on a newspaper report awhile back came as no surprise. After all, as Keith Simpson, Britain's top pathologist, who conducted the autopsy, put it, she was grossly overweight. The article continued: Coroner Gavin Thurston recorded that the 33-year-old singer died of natural causes.

"Natural causes"—that familiar term used in conjunction with heart attack deaths, was in this instance hard for me to swallow, since it involved a 33-year-old person. Heart attacks are the leading cause of death in the U.S., so I suppose most people will regard her death as natural. I consider it suicide.

That's a strong statement. But with all the evidence we have on obesity as the prime cause of heart disease, we still have fat people literally lining up to die of attacks.

Cass Elliot's death was a personal loss to me as to many others. Not only did I enjoy her talented singing, but it was made more personal by both my parents suffering heart attacks in recent years—not fatal; their real tragedy came after the medical bills were tallied and both were forced into early retirement. One ray of sunshine is that they both are recovering well and I very much doubt there'll be a relapse, since they realized that their excess weight had been the cause. Both are now on one of the finest health regimens I know of. Each time I see them they weigh less and look more robust.

I'm writing this on a 747 flying back to Los Angeles after visiting them. I was amazed how much younger both appeared. Hopefully, they'll continue to improve. I'm sure they will, for they clearly prefer good health to heart attacks.

An old saying has it that we learn

from our mistakes. I prefer to learn from the mistakes of others. Earlier I called Cass Elliot's death a suicide, and in that sense, I say that every overweight person is flirting with death. We all have to die sometime, but why hasten it by obesity?

What can we do about it? Well, we have certain laws which protect us from ourselves—drug laws, for example. Why not laws against obesity? Sound ridiculous? I agree, but it makes more sense than the drug laws. For one thing, anti-obesity laws would be easier to enforce. We wouldn't need a special fat squad; any citizen could accuse a fellow citizen of obesity and perform a citizen's arrest if the accused couldn't prove he or she was within legal weight.

And just think how many more beautiful people there'd be who were once fatties! Heart disease would still exist, of course, but would be far from the leading cause of death. We'd be a much more energetic nation. Our gross national product would increase because fat people take more time out to rest.

What would we do with fatties caught in violation of their legal weight? Simple: send them to a fat farm, a sort of forced-labor camp where they'd be worked and dieted into losing weight.

That could be one way to deal with it, but we don't have anti-obesity laws and probably never will—do you think our fat-assed politicians would push through such a law? They'd be the first to go to the fat farm!

Instead, we must each do it on our own. It's tough, especially since here in heart-disease-land we believe fat people to be jolly ones—just healthy, well-fed types.

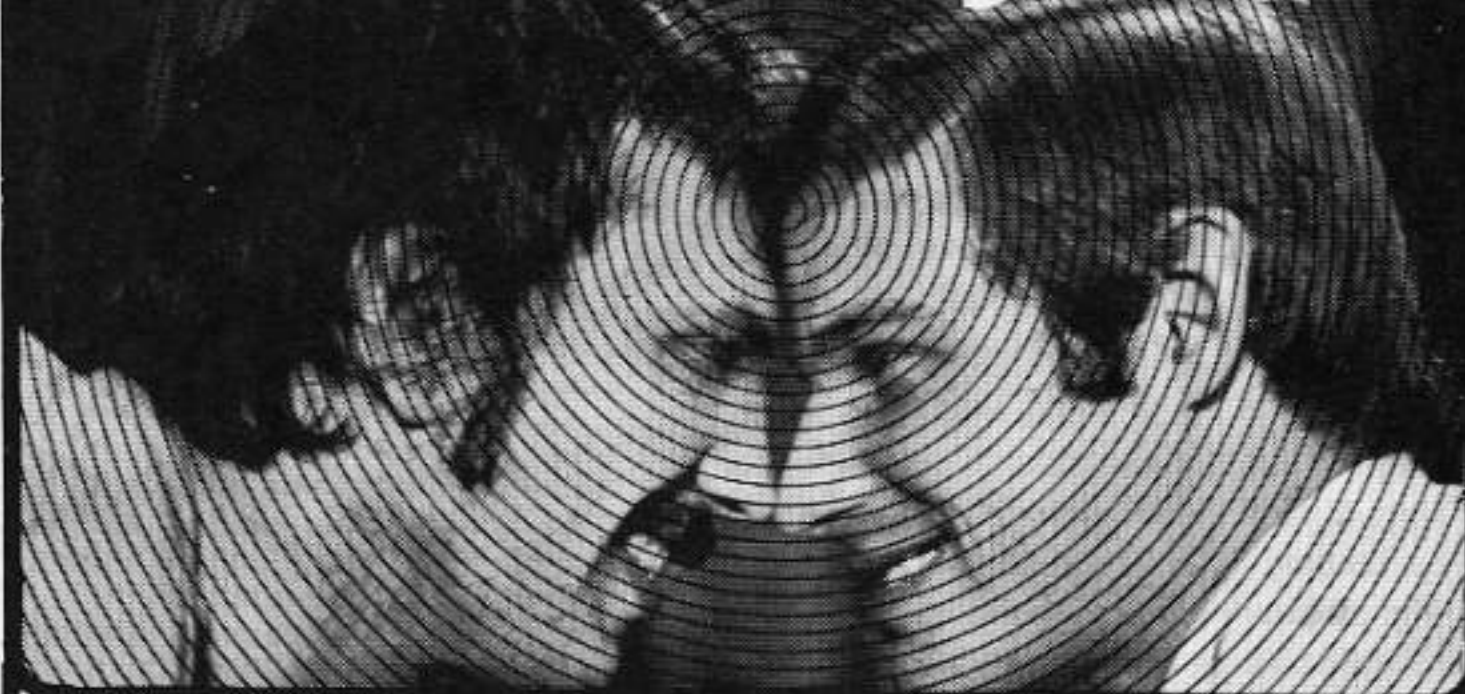
In contrast to our jolly, roly-poly, heart-disease-prone society are accounts of a people living unbelievably long lives in the remote Caucasus region of Russia. Heart disease is unheard of among them.

Why? Scientists studying them gave a variety of reasons, but one reason struck me as bearing on their ability to live long and useful lives: the fact that they consider anyone who is overweight to be ill. In such a society one could easily maintain a healthy weight, since fat people are the oddballs.

I only hope I've said something in this article which will encourage someone to avoid committing willful suicide.

—JIM CASSIDY

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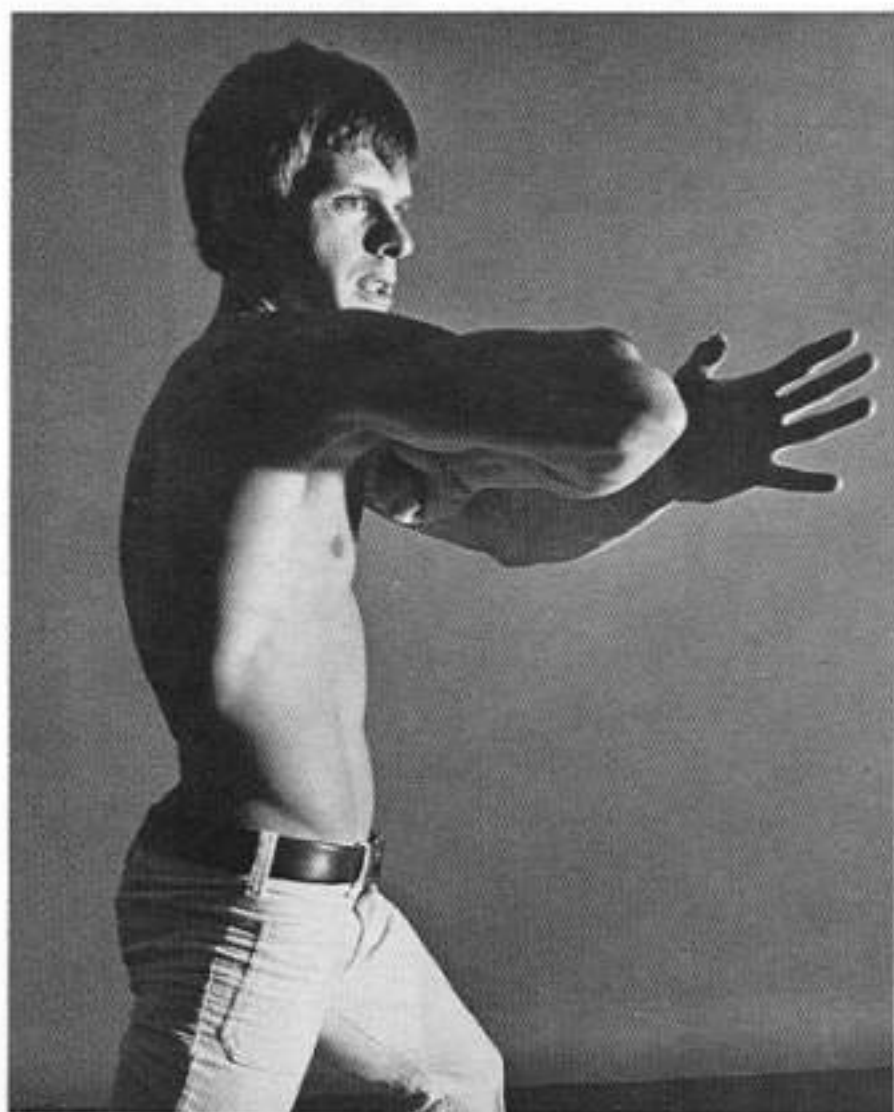
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personality

MARC SINGER

In The Classic Mold

by Allan Leopold
photography by James Armstrong

I had just seen the ACT production of *Taming of the Shrew* and Marc Singer's volatile Petruchio was still uppermost in my mind. Anyone who could set fire to the Bard with such intensity must be some kind of Superman. And I wasn't altogether wrong. In private life, 26-year-old Marc paces savagely when interviewed. He stabs the air with his finger to make a point and he refuses to compromise himself in any way.

"When you create a role like Petruchio, you can stand on stage and say: 'This is what I believe about life. These are the balances of Ying and Yang, where two people can become a cohesive unit and face the world as one. There is definitely some Petruchio in me. It expresses everything I feel about life at the present. I feel great exuberance in being alive. I refuse to be connected as a piece of property with anything. I want to be my own man.'"

A cloud swept over Marc's face and, for a moment, I beheld a young brooding Hamlet.

"Tell me about your childhood."

Marc is very close to his family and any mention of them brings forth the sun. He smiled, his face became animated again, and sparks literally flew from his eyes.

"I was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1948. My father, Jacques, was the conductor of the Warsaw Philharmonic. Now he conducts the Port-

land Symphony in Oregon and he has trebled the audiences there. Mom is Leslie Singer, a concert pianist. I have a younger sister and brother, Laurie and Gregory, both of whom are sixteen, and an older brother, Claude, who is twenty-seven and a political science teacher at the University of Washington. When I was five, Dad used to read Edgar Allan Poe to me in the evenings. I always cried at *Anabel Lee*. In the fifth grade he tricked me into going to see Sir Laurence Olivier in *Richard III* by telling me it would be about knights. I couldn't understand the first third of it but the last two-thirds suddenly made sense. I was captivated and I went home and immediately memorized a speech from it when I should have been studying my homework. From that moment on, my whole life has been wrapped up in Shakespeare and Sir Laurence Olivier has been my idol.

"My talents are insignificant compared to my father's. I live constantly and happily in his shadow. Do you know he supported his family at the age of twelve by playing the violin in Poland? He was one of the earliest members of the famed Curtis Institute in New York. He has a flair for displaying life's exciting qualities to an audience."

"Did you start out in life with *that* body or did you win it in a raffle?"

Marc laughed uproariously. "My whole family was athletic. I went out for every sport at Windsor Park Gram-

mar School and Cullen Place Junior High in Portland. Then, much later, when we moved to Texas, I rode horses and worked in the sun. At first I was afraid of the water and Mom did a Zen experience on me. She forced me to swim the length of a pool."

"What's a Zen experience?"

"Time and effort cease to exist so a constancy of rhythm is established in your life and all things become effortless. When I was twelve, I had never really swum before. Just splashed in the shallow end. But Mom took charge and changed all that. She forced me to develop an expert crawl stroke and to become a really good diver. I became like a bow string pulled taut. Once I started athletics in a big way, I couldn't stop."

"I saw the results on stage."

"It helps me toss Fredi around. We did all that gradually. Bill Ball kept saying, 'What if we tried this? Could you do it?' And Fredi and I were game for anything. And we pulled it all together and it worked. Today, I'm into Kung Fu."

"How did *that* start?"

"In a very strange way. My wife and I were sitting drinking in a bar. Gosh, it's been so long since we gave up drinking it's hard to believe we ever did. Anyway, there was this drunk sitting next to us who picked a fight. He probably didn't know what he was saying but he threatened to cut my throat. And I realized that, if he decided to do it, he was

bigger than I was and might get away with it. I would need some help in case the subject ever cropped up again. The next day my wife and I enrolled in a Kung Fu school under one of the foremost masters in the U.S., Richard Cunningham. He was the first Caucasian to be released by the Chinese Mainland Organization with full credentials to teach the real secrets."

"How did your stage career begin?"

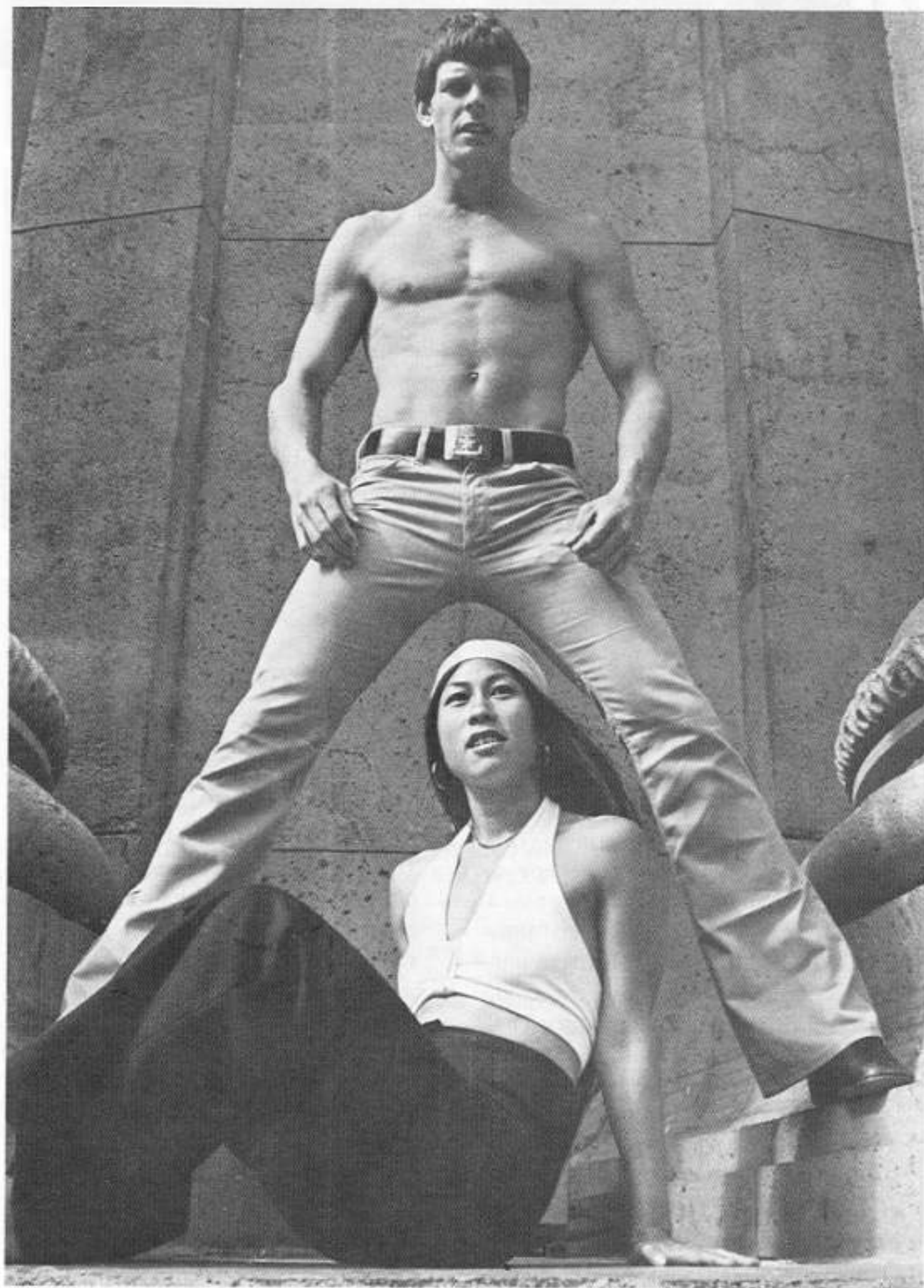
"At Lincoln High in Portland. John Lehman, the drama instructor, was stuck for a Petruchio in *Taming of the Shrew*. Yes, that play has a Karma for me. I always seem to be returning to it. The actor assigned the part was kicked out of school for drinking and I was snatched up as a last-minute replacement. I'm sure that I put the audience to sleep. Maybe I was volcanic in a few passages. I remember I rather liked the way I played the returning home scene after the wedding. It was eleven years ago and I can't even remember the name of my Katherine. Please apologize to her in print. She was a lot better than I was and she carried me through the show. The next year I played Lockie in *The Hasty Heart*. Accents come naturally to me and my burr was no problem.

"I went on to Indiana U for two years and did several plays there. If you want to be a recognized artist, you have to hew your artistry out of stone. It isn't going to blossom overnight. I had a lot of energy then and very little form. I did a play by Michel de Ghelderode, *The Blind Man*, Lamprido's *The Women at the Tomb* and tried to rise above my slovenly work habits. I applied to the University of Washington and discovered they were trying to form an élitest conservatory of the drama like Jouilliard's music school. Out of 300 applicants, ten are selected and, inasmuch as I was included, I felt like one of the chosen people. I was able to begin chronologically with the earliest of English dramatic literature, *Everyman*. I played Strength and Death. I followed this with Biedermann's *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. Gammer means grandma and I played Hodge. The classics speak to me quite personally and strike in me great resonances. There are few things in everyday life as arresting and revealing as Shakespeare.

"That summer, I worked for the A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle and I

earned my Equity card. I played Chal Cuchima in *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, the lion in Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion*, and the narrator in *The Dancing Donkey*, a terrific sort of Abbott and Costello routine for children. Peter Weiss' *Marat-Sade* was a fascinating experience. That show catapulted Glenda Jackson to world fame. Those bars are not created to protect the audience from the inmates but to protect the inmates from the audience. I played Duperret with a smudge of rouge on each cheek. My costume was a hand-me-down or hand-me-up affair of grasshopper green, a couple of sizes too small, and incredibly dirty.

"In September, I returned to college and played Shylock and Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* in alternating repertory. Then I did the Jacobean play, *The Changeling* followed by a Restoration play, Congreve's *Love for Love*. I was Samson Legend, about fifty or sixty years old, in a wig. Like Olivier, I love playing old men in wigs and padding myself to convey obesity. There is no period in English tradition where people were so brazenly unashamed of their foibles nor so proud of their finer accomplishments. To do my old-age make-up, I stipple two layers of red and ochre colors laid over a pink base to give the mottled effect of a liver-spotted skin





texture. I wear a youthful wig, counter-pointed against an aging face, and heavy padding. With this going for me, I can really *be* that character. I did the Italian Commedia del Arte Theatre of Galdoni's *The Servant of Two Masters*. I played Lucindo, the romantic lead, under the direction of Arnie Zaslove. He is now with the National Theatre of Canada and is one of the greatest artists I have ever met. Lucindo was the precursor of Petruchio in the Commedia del Arte tradition.

"I returned to summer stock to do McCann in Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Dudard in *Rhinoceros*, Rosencrantz in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and Joey in Pinter's *Homecoming*. In 1969, I parted company with the University of Washington. I am extraordinarily fond of two roles I played there: at the age of 22 I did *King Lear*. It's such a great play, such a masterpiece! It exalts the actor. I was also fiercely proud of my Trigorin in *The Seagull*. Shakespeare and Chekhov—a rich feast for any actor.

"And now it came the official time for me to leave the warm, cloistered university life and go out into the cold, cruel world. The Seattle Repertory Theatre beckoned and I hastened to do Camille for them in Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear*. Bill Ross directed me as Aumerle to Richard Chamberlain's *Richard III*, a really fine actor. A change of pace came in the role of Sandy in Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* with Maureen O'Sullivan. I like Coward. He writes about that in-between time in English

history that is so hard to capture. The essence of his plays brings to us a quality of English life that has disappeared. Rather like Fitzgerald in this country. In 1970, I played Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. My wife appeared as Cobweb. Then my Karma resurfaced and I did Lucentio in *Taming of the Shrew*. It seems I'm constantly returning to her.

"*Antony and Cleopatra* with Michael Learned, was my third play in Balboa Park. I did Sextus Pompeius' general, Menas, to her Iris. I played him completely blackface from head to foot. I thought a chief general of an army of pirates, which controlled the major seas of the total known world, would have to reflect all the countries upon which the seas touched. The mechanized, civilized armies couldn't deal with him. That's why he controlled the seas. If he were white, he'd be just another white man. He would *think* like a white man. To be a leader of a volunteer army of pirates *outside* the law, he would have to be an anti-regimentarian of such great stature and accomplishment that *his* world would be the *natural* law. Ellis Raab directed me in that. He's a gentle man, a kind man and I love him.

"At this time, the Milwaukee Repertory Company made me a very flattering offer. But Bill Ball wooed and won me for ACT.

"The year was 1971 and Bill cast me in drag for openers. I did Ftatateeta in *Caesar and Cleopatra* and I had a big fat flop on my hands. But, you know, it

was a logical move on Ball's part, casting me in that role. Ftatateeta has to scare soldiers and it's hard to find a woman who can do that. In one of Shaw's prologues he has her beat some up. But the conception was too schmaltzy and it just didn't work. I followed this with Rosencrantz again in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and it was a hit. *Dandy Dick* gave me a chance to play a fifty-year-old retired army captain with a great handlebar mustache. I love that kind of thing and Tarver became one of my favorite roles. I played Kay, a forty-four-year-old foreman, in David Storey's *The Contractor*. He was a man at the peak of his physical strength who had a great depth of maturity."

"Would you do his *Changing Room* in the nude?"

"Of course. It's essential to the author's intent. But when it comes to nudity in the theatre, the actor better be totally in control of himself."

"What did you think of Romeo's nude bedroom scene in Zefferelli's film, *Romeo and Juliet*?"

"I loathed it. Not because of the nudity but because I didn't think Olivia Hussey and Leonard Whiting believed what they were saying to each other."

"Pray continue with your chronicle."

"In 1972 I went to Hollywood to work with Cunningham on my Kung Fu. And I had to learn new rules, as it was a whole new ball game. It was strange to meet people, hand them a classical resumé, and be told, 'Yes, but do you have any film on you?' As Mark Twain wrote: 'A man who carries a cat home by the tail once has blazed a world of experience that someone who hasn't has missed.'

"Hollywood was the cat that I was carrying by the tail and it has taught me a lot. Three months later I returned to ACT, wiser but not chastened. I was eager to return to work and I plunged into Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac* to Marsha Mason's Roxanne. She was nominated for an Academy Award for her film, *Cinderella Liberty*. Then I did Tony in *You Can't Take It With You* and Cain in *Cain and Abel*. It was a year of romantic leads and I thought I'd go crazy. Shakespeare was calling me back to the Old Globe. This time I did Proteus in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* for them and, that summer, I taped *Cyrano* for KCET.

"I played the homosexual, Basanio, in *The Merchant of Venice* for Bobby Bueneventura at ACT. He remounted the original Ellis Raab version. He made it seamier and less elegant but I was eager to do this part because I thought I had a dead-on conception of it. A young man that attractive must have an effect on a harsh society like Venice. You see, he used up this man's last penny and he put him on credit. At the beginning of the play, we took a stroll along a canal and Basanio is forced to make a choice between Portia and Antonio. He has given away her ring and she says: 'You're still under *that* man's thumb. You've given away the ring because *he* told you to. Are you still my husband and your own man or *that* man's Concubine?'"

"I remember in rehearsal grabbing Paul Shenar by the face and giving him a large smack on the lips. Both the director and Paul were astonished. They never expected *that* from me. The atmosphere grew quite uncomfortable and, although I was just as happy to keep it in, Bobby ordered the kiss cut."

"Too bad. I should have liked to have seen it. And now the *Shrew* again. Any rehearsal tidbits on *this* version?"

"Well, Fredi and I locked horns at first on interpretation. We're both very strong-willed, you know."

"Where on earth did you find that marvelous material for your tights? They make the tightest tights I've ever seen. There's not a wrinkle anywhere and they look absolutely like part of your flesh."

"Bill found it at some ballet. He went backstage with his assistant and commanded: 'Get me *that*!'"

"What's next on your busy schedule?"

"I go to Hawaii with *The Cherry Orchard*. You ought to see my Trofimov. I have a bald pate with a receding hairline and a bad complexion. I wear glasses and I play him stooped over and very dirty."

"Hmmm ... sounds romantic. Undisguised, you have brown hair, green eyes and weigh. . . ?"

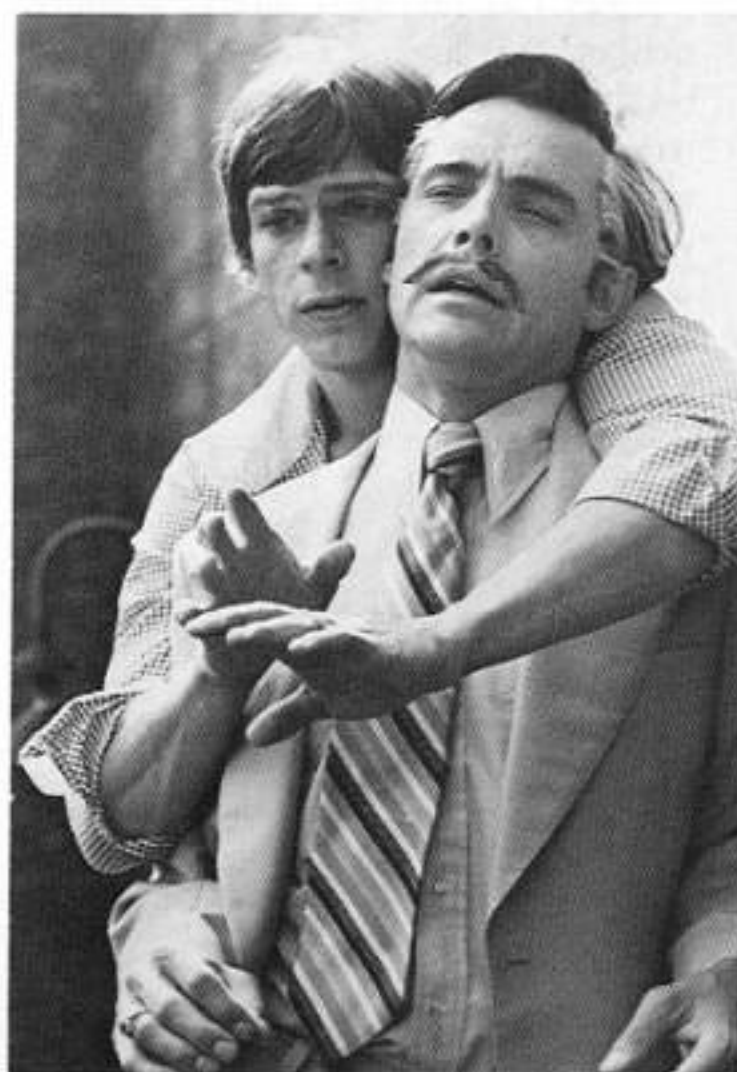
"One eighty-five."

"Height?"

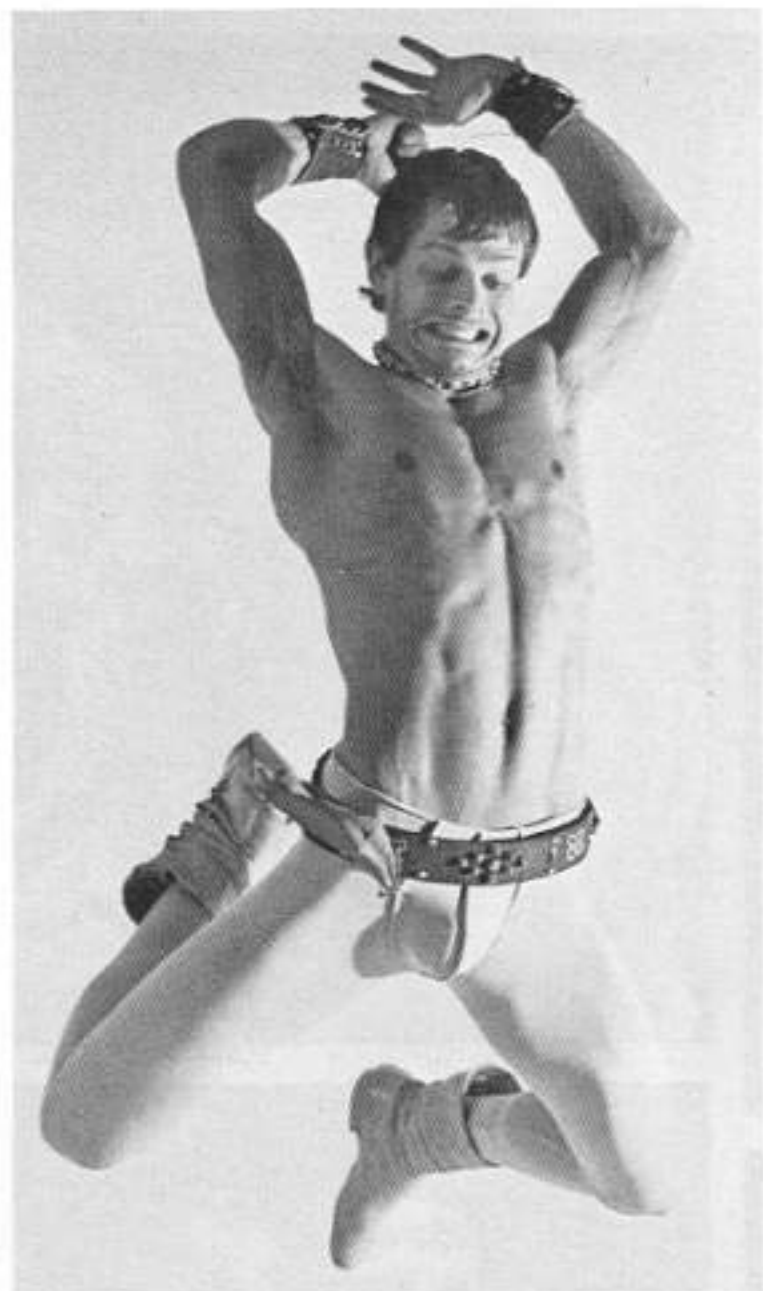
"Six feet two."

"Favorite foods?"

"I eat everything except processed sugar. I take only honey. Sometimes I think I'd like to enter an eating contest



Opposite: Marc made his American Conservatory Theatre debut in Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra* in the role of Cleopatra's nurse, Ftateeta (2nd from left). Top Left: In ACT's production of *The Merchant of Venice*, Marc played a homosexual Basanio who wooed Antonio (Paul Shenar). Top Right: As Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Marc was part of a great Romantic triangle which included Peter Donat (Cyrano) and Marsha Mason (Roxanne). Above Left: In the delightful Kaufman and Hart farce, *You Can't Take It With You*, Marc was Tony. Above Right: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Tom Stoppard's fractured reworking of the story of Hamlet, saw Marc and Larry Carpenter (right) as the two would-be assassins. (Photos on these two pages are courtesy of the American Conservatory Theatre and were researched by Douglas Dean.) Next Two Pages: Sounds heard 'round the world resulted from Marc and Fredi Olster's embattled Petruchio and Katherine in ACT and Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Rarely, if ever, has the wooing of man and maid been so athletically and violently enacted as these James Armstrong photos so aptly reveal.



just to see how much I could put away."

"Back again to that Petruchio body. How do you maintain it?"

"I don't smoke or drink. And let's face it, I'm just 26. I do a six-minute mile whenever I get the chance."

"Hobbies?"

"I'm writing a novel."

"Called?"

"I have no title as yet. It's a western. You know, I've lived in Texas and I ride well. Someday I'd like to do a cowboy movie or a detective story. Just for fun. It's a secret canvas I would like to paint. But, most of all, I'd love to do the classics on the screen."

"And follow in the footsteps of Olivier?"

"I owe all my creative life to him. He struck a chord that made me ring and it's still ringing in me today. It's inspirational and always will be. His *Uncle Vanya* was one of the finest things he's ever done. Each moment was resonant with meaning. I have always wanted to emulate this actor but I have never tried England. I'm an American. My roots are American but Shakespeare is my favorite playwright."

"Have you any plans concerning any one of his plays?"

"Yes. I would like to direct a production of *Troilus and Cressida*. I like it because it's difficult. It starts out hysterically funny and then gets more and more bitter. The message is: 'You create your own hell, Mankind, and now You wallow in it.'

"It's never produced because it's so hellishly difficult to do. The role of Pandarus was created for Alistair Sim. You need a whole cast of that kind of stature."

"I feel at present that I am in control of my art. I find a great sense of responsibility to the playwrights whose work I perform and a continuity of quality that I have touched upon in *Taming of the Shrew*. That's not an unhappy burden

but it's a burden I will have to carry for the rest of my life. I'm sure that it's one that will increase rather than diminish. I feel I have reached a moment where I can understand an actor like Olivier who feels compelled to act at a time of life where there is no necessity for him to do it anymore. He never spoke of acting as a gentle mistress or a joyful lover. He spoke of it as his cross and his compulsion. The compulsive quality stems from his responsibility to his art. If you believe in reincarnation, you will feel that Shakespeare was the last flicker of an entity preparing to evolve into greater things. If your way is that of an actor, what better way can you take than to follow Shakespeare?"





GAY UNITY

ITS VALUES AND PROBLEMS

Few of us would fail to assign great spiritual value, or at least strategic value of the highest priority, to the attainment of unity among Gays. We feel we need a great surge of unity and commitment if we are to attain such political goals as ending our legal and quasi-legal disadvantages and establishing our unquestioned equal rights in every civil area.

Even those who tenaciously assert that we are united by no bond or interest other than our accidentally shared sex habits and their attendant illegality, concede generally that we require a warmer spirit of unity to overcome public prejudice and legal impediment.

Others of us believe Gays to be united indeed by deeper, only half-discovered bonds both psychic and social, a cosmopolitan impulse toward worldwide fraternity/sorority, whose ultimate goal is to transcend the insularity of the nuclear family, to establish a non-possessive standard of love which, energized by centuries of persecution half shared with other minorities, must draw us first into a worldwide gay family-fold, leaping over all those other boundaries, of black, white and brown, female, male and indeterminate, hip, swinging and square, conservative, liberal and radical, Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Humanist, and finally without homogenization, uniting gay and non-gay, seeking a truly diverse universalism.

After World War II, Americans in penance for their earlier hateful prejudices, tried to take a shortcut to that universalism, hoping to compensate for erstwhile harassment of all those who were different by denying the existence and integrity of all such differences. Thus many a Gay or Black, frightened by their uniqueness, repeated the popular litany: "My gayness (or my blackness) is an insignificant detail—not really *me*. Just accept me as *human* and let me

in your precious club." But our humanness lies as much in our particularities as in the banal fact that we most of us have two arms and two legs. By attempting to submerge their uniqueness, they reduced their humanness to conformist trash.

Well, color didn't go away by our pretending not to see it, nor did the substantial effects of centuries of color prejudice. The walls have come down a bit, but Blacks discovered, as Gays would afterward, that the price our society set on this chimerical goal of instant integration was the wipeout of all minority ties, interests, talents, habits and preferences.

So Gays, like other minority groups, rediscovered about 1965 that *before* we could melt with self-respect into that great non-gay homogeneity, we had to build the resources of our own community in order to achieve a real merger of equals (when the time becomes ripe for merger) rather than the individual swallowing up of erstwhile deviants into a faceless mass where all outward standards remain Wasp/hetero/male.

And in order to effectively build the resources of our own community, we must lay aside all feeling of guilt about seeking the company of our own kind. We must rise above the notion that we associate with other Gays only for the purpose of cruising. It is the deadliest impediment to gay unity that many of us have been taught to value one another only as potential tricks.

Unity: For Practical Ends Only?

Some see only a practical need to build up that sense of gay sorority/fraternity into a worldwide fellowship—because such a spirit would strengthen our political struggle for law reform, for more civilized police, for an end to legalized discrimination. Others of us regard that very practical aim as merely a

first step, even as a cheapening of our natural mystic bond of fellowship. We would rather put the emphasis *for its own sake* on the building of gay fellowship and community, the repairing of our individual alienation, the exploration of more creative social relationships. This would not merely strengthen us as a voting bloc in the game of power politics, it would add immeasurably to our integrity, our creativity, our happiness, our humanity. It is of such intrinsic value that it could even be worth additional years of tribulation. . . .

Most of us have felt the natural tug of this sense of fellowship already sprouting in our souls. Unhappily, we have also felt the alienation, the lack of mutual regard, the hatefulness, the fear of touching one another in unselfish love, and many of us have been guilty of persecuting those minorities within our minority. These negative traits burned into us by our hetero upbringing have become a terrible if dwindling part of our makeshift "gay scene," generating still the oft-heard plaint that the "gay" world is a sad one indeed.

Whether we advocate gay unity as a political expedient, or whether we value this urge to an ever-more-inclusive world fellowship as innate to our very gayness, we must recognize that there are solid and complex reasons why the unity we seek does not presently exist—why it may continue for some time to elude us.

We will not achieve any unity short of totalitarian means unless we first begin to listen to one another—to try to understand those other Gays whose ideas seem to us preposterous and offensive—just as our own ideas and actions offend hetero sensibilities.

Many of the calls for unity so pompously laid down in our more influential publications are mere twaddle: hypocritical, empty-headed wishful thinking; platitudinous moralizing by those who

close their minds to viewpoints other than their own and who do little generally to build the unity and the mobilization they so loudly demand.

Their demand for unity often has the same tone and content we hear from hets: "Conform to my dictates, and forget all this nonsense about being different."

I think there can in fact be deeply meaningful and powerfully effective unity among Gays who are some Christian, some Jewish, some atheist, Gays who are high on the spirit of camp or genderfuck, or on leather games, and others who still regard inconspicuousness a prime virtue, Gays who glory in the old husband/wife roles and Gays who consider such roles to be the original sin, Gays of either gender who deeply resent, or feel resented by, the opposite gender and Gays who simply cannot understand why everybody doesn't just get together happily and trade recipes.

But one clear prerequisite for that unity is that we learn to transcend our differences. That does not mean that we erase or ignore our differences. We may even have to focus more attention on them than we would personally like. But we must find the patience, the vision and the gay concern to begin to comprehend those whose gay instincts or behavior seems contrary to our own. We must begin to really listen to one another, to respect one another—even where understanding is lacking.

Impediments to Unity

We did not escape from hetero conformity merely to establish a new conformity in our own smaller circle. We seek not the cheap unity of conformism, but a higher unity which nurtures itself in diversity.

The worst enemies of gay unity are those who, while demanding unity, refuse to see our differences, or to recognize their validity.

But stop! you say. How does it build unity for us all to be pulling in so many different directions? It doesn't, of course—but disunity will not go away simply from our huffing and puffing at it. And I personally am not necessarily advocating all these differences. I merely say that we have to take account of them.

Some gay friends have complained to

me repeatedly over the years, lamenting our diversity of organizations and publications—and wouldn't it be nicer and neater if they all got together in one big happy group? Theoretically, it might be neater, but what must be the cost of such a merger?

Simply that we chop off all those who don't agree to whatever approach wins out (and how *do* we decide, *who* decides, what kind of organization that will be?). If the new one-big-union is to be non-religious, then off-with-the-heads of all Gays who want their own churches or even committees to bridge the gap separating them from established churches. We'll have to outlaw

them, won't we? Or if we start with a poll and find that most Gays are religious, then we make our one-big-union MCC-like—which is fine for those like me who appreciate MCC, but rough on Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and those who see religion as a bag of shit and the chief source of our troubles. Do they just decapitate themselves, or get baptised, or at least swear off any resorting to typewriter or to picket signs to advertise their deviation from the approved standard of deviance?

I think we can come closest to unity when with a united front to the world we say that whatever our differences we

Continued on Page 71





rising stars

IN SEARCH OF GAY HEROES: MICHAEL COHEN AND STEVEN GROSSMAN

by Neal Weaver

photography by Ken Howard



In May of this year, the New York firemen, the Catholic Archdiocese of New York militantly led by Cardinal Cooke, and Queens County Democratic leader Matthew Troy launched an all-out campaign to defeat Intro 2, New York City's Gay Civil Rights Bill. In May, *New York Post* columnist James A. Wechsler printed the following letter in his column, under the title, "A Lonely Outcry":

"I am 17 years of age, and a senior at one of the city's most reputable high schools. I am a homosexual. It is really difficult to relate how I discovered this phenomenon, but I assure you it was not due to any teacher I ever had, nor any fireman I saw with limp wrists.

"I am on the football team, and I date girls, and thereby I have created a pretty normal facade. I am normal. I know that many of the guys on the team would never accept this, nor would my parents. I feel very alone not knowing also any public figures I can use to model my life after (in a homosexual sense).

"Thanks to people like you firemen, people who feel that they're gay from ages 9 and 10 will never be able to lead a respectable life. Thank you, uncles, aunts, mothers and fathers. All the gay 'idols' are in the past—Michelangelo, da Vinci, Proust. If Intro 2 is not passed, all I can say is that would represent a monumental failure for New York—the civilized place. What are you afraid of?

"Unfortunately Anonymous"

Intro 2 did not pass, of course. The civilized place flunked out. Fear, bigotry, and prejudice triumphed again. But the subject was aired. The vote was close. And the gay community learned a little more clearly who its political enemies are.

And as it happened, that letter appeared on a day when I was beginning a

double-interview piece on two young poet-singers and composers who are forthright about being gay, and strive to deal with the gay experience in an honest and candid way: Michael Cohen and Steven Grossman (in alphabetical order). It struck me that the work they are doing was not unrelated to that letter. They do have the courage to stand up and be counted. To say, "I am what I am!" and share their experience with the world at large. And through their efforts, perhaps, the young people coming up, like Unfortunately Anonymous, will be a little less isolated, a little less unfortunate, and even, perhaps, a little less anonymous.

I also discovered, when I met Steven and Michael, that they are good friends, with a strong mutual respect. As people and in their work, they are as different as night and day. But some things they do have in common: each is hellbent on finding his own identity, free of the stereotypes that both the gay world and the straight world would impose on them. And both are serious people (even moralists, perhaps), out to find out what it means to be a man who is gay, and how they can live, decently and productively, as men and musicians, despite straight hostilities and the emotional instability and garbled morality that marks so much of the gay scene.

Michael Cohen:

The Last Angry Young Man

Michael Cohen is 23 years old, big, bearded, agreeable, and deceptively easygoing. Physically he couldn't be further removed from the stereotypic image of a "gay singer." But listeners to New York City's countercultural, listener-supported Pacifica Station, WBAI-FM, have come to know him as an up-front writer-singer, bent on exploring the gay experience honestly and deeply

—and possessed of the talent, as a singer as well as songwriter, to make his explorations musically exciting. And now he has an album out, "What Did You Expect?", on the Folkways label, which is beginning to get him some national attention.

He hasn't yet tasted real commercial success—but that's largely his own choice: during his early days of appearing on WBAI, an offer did come in from a more commercially oriented record company, but he turned it down on ideological grounds. Now his ideas are changing, and he feels the need for the musical and technical resources only the commercial labels can afford to offer. He's working on a deal with a major company, and hopefully it will have jelled by the time this story appears.

In "What Did You Expect?", Michael runs the gamut of the gay experience, starting with a song about the trauma of coming out ("The Last Angry Young Man") and going on to unfettered gay love songs, and songs of disillusion and philosophic reflection. They're the songs of a young man who stands up on his own two feet, and takes his existence by the scruff of the neck and shakes it till it begins to make sense to him.

Michael grew up in Kew Gardens Hills, in the borough of Queens, in New York City. His father, before his retirement this past June, was an executive at Twentieth Century-Fox, in the European Exchange Sales Department in New York.

"I was a perennial dropout. I went to Queens College, and had a good deal going there. I was able to get into an individualized BA program. A part of the arts honors department, with special courses, and a program where you got 32 credits for outside work.

"I left school to do my outside work

—and moved to Manhattan, the Upper West Side. Up until then, the music had been a personal thing. I never thought of it as a career. It was something I did for myself and my friends. But they gave me a lot of encouragement and were pushing me to make a tape and take it to WBAI.

"There was a guy named Charles Pitts—an announcer who had the Saturday night gay program, 'Out of the Slough'. He was the director of homosexual programming—in fact, all sexual programming for the station. On his show, he played tapes that people sent in.

"So I put four songs on tape and took them to him. He was a strange fellow. Doesn't like to show emotion. I didn't know whether he liked the tape or not. And right off we got into a violent ideological argument. I thought that was the end of it.

"But then on Saturday night, he played the tape all night. It really freaked me out. I was visiting out on a farm in New Jersey. I just accidentally turned on the radio—and there I was—on the air! It was really devastating.

"I called Charles a couple of days later and thanked him. He said, 'Come on down and let's talk some more.' And that was the start of my relationship with WBAI and with Charles. But that terminated with my deciding to make the record for Folkways. He's a counter-culture freak, totally against anything to make money.

"We recorded every Sunday or Monday night—on four tracks. I was working in a psychiatric hospital. I never went back to Queens College, because everything turned out so well." (His subsequent jobs have ranged from driving a cab to booking films for Warner Brothers.)

"Every Saturday night, Charles played what we'd recorded during the week. And other people around the station began to pick up on my stuff. I did a couple of my own shows, and went on Charles' program and talked about where the songs came from."

And where did they come from?

"Well, one thing that triggered a lot—all my early anger—it was casting out demons. I had gone through something called aversion therapy. To try to change. To overcome being gay. And it was like *Clockwork Orange*. . . . Well, it

took a different form. They didn't put electrodes in my brain, or go in for covert sensitization, but it was the same thing.

"When I was 17 or 18, before I started college, I broke down about being gay. I couldn't take being gay or the whole hypocrisy of my lifestyle. I was in love with my best friend. But nobody knew. I just kind of freaked out, during my senior year in high school. I guess I must have realized when I was 13 or 14, but I'd locked it away in a corner of my mind. I went to the library and read up on how I was sick and homosexual and all those wonderful things. . . .

"Then one weekend my older brother and I—we went to Boston to visit friends. We took a couple of ups and rapped all night. And in the course of that I confessed. It was very tearful, very cathartic. He was terribly shocked. He couldn't believe it. He was just graduating from college as a psych major. But he could see nothing of what it meant.

"I was willing to accept gayness if I could tell my friends and create some kind of lifestyle. I didn't know anything about homosexuality except from reading. It was hard to accept myself as gay. . . .

"Anyway, my brother and I concluded we *both* needed a psychiatrist, for different reasons. My mother works for two psychiatrists. He went to one of

them. A very prestigious shrink, who said, 'I don't think Michael's really gay. He should go to Laurence J. Hatterer.'

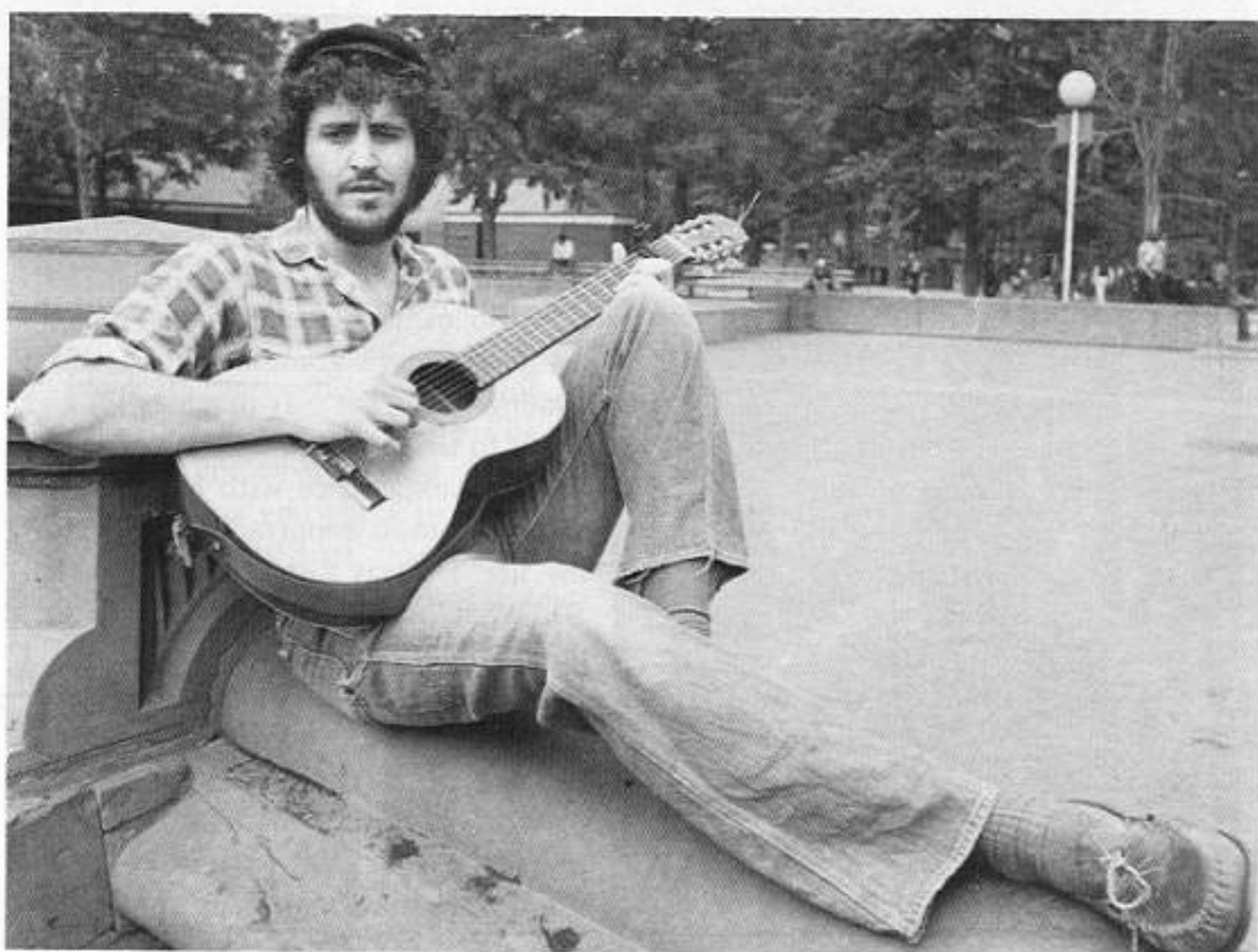
"Hatterer is the author of two books: *The Artist in Society*, and *Changing Homosexuality in the Male*. He deals only with gay people and artists. And in my opinion, his therapy consists merely of destroying the artist and the homosexual.

"The first time I went to him, he sat there and asked questions about my upbringing and my state of mind. I was just depressed and confused. But at the end of the session, he said to me: 'You're a regular guy. In a reasonably short time we'll get you back on the right path. You just went down the wrong road. Detoured, shall we say.'

"I never was heterosexual, never felt any heterosexual feelings. So I was flabbergasted. It didn't seem possible. My homosexual feelings were very strong—both sexually and emotionally. There was this guy I was deeply in love with, very romantic. . . .

"I said, 'I don't know. I can't see that ever being the case.' And he said, 'You don't have to change if you don't want to, but think about it. It would be the proper course. You can make use of this chance to be happy, or be a miserable sickie.'

"He gave me anti-depressants, and the first night I took sleeping pills. The stuff he gave me—it was qualudes, which





later turned out to be one of the psychedelic drugs. I got euphoric on the idea I could be straight, function well, be really well adjusted.

"So I embarked on the course. And it went on, for a couple of years, off and on. But every four or five months I'd stop. Something inside me said **WRONG**. But I was able to repress sexual feelings. I actively worked at not being aroused. If I saw someone attractive on the subway, I'd avert my eyes. . . . I had to stop seeing friends I felt any strong affection for. . . .

"And I guess it worked, in the sense that I was totally asexual for a while. I did masturbate now and then, with some kind of blank fantasy . . . I was able to get an erection. But I tried not to think of men. Kept trying to think of women. It was just a mechanical release for sexual tensions. . . .

"The next phase of the treatment was supposed to obliterate homosexual fantasies. But what do you replace them with? My fantasies and emotions were stripped away till I was like a zombie.



And after that phase it never worked.

"You had to work on the theory you were sick. It involved an incredible amount of self-denial. The things I later realized. . . . What I was really doing was playing around with my self-hatred. I was denying every feeling I have.

"I look back now on the feelings I had for that guy I was in love with . . . and wish I'd been able to speak and act, even if the feelings had been unrequited. . . .

"Anyway, I decided to leave therapy. But I wasn't in a position to come out. I was so taken up with denying everything and hating everything. . . . So I got into some bad scenes. Got heavily into drugs. Heavily into the Bible. Almost became a Jesus freak.

"I went to California for a while, and hooked up with a group there. I felt I needed to be saved. From myself. If Hatterer couldn't do it, maybe Jesus could.

"But I kept going back to Hatterer, though, starting all over again. Till I finally—I don't remember when—decided the whole fucking thing was wrong: I was a human being. I should be allowed to have feelings and express them.

"But before I could begin to do that, I had to spend six months working on negating what Hatterer had done to me. I had to really work on that. I'm still left with scars from that experience. And I guess some of the scars are permanent. For a couple of years I made self-denial a lifestyle. I still catch myself watching myself, and I have to say, 'Hey, it's all right. You can feel that if you want to.'

"About that time, I started to read political literature. But that wasn't really an impetus. It all came from myself. Gay Lib made it easier in that the climate was more accommodating about coming out. That's as much as I'll give credit to the movement.

"That experience with Hatterer was about the most important experience of my life. He was a strange man. About 50. What people call nice. If you met him, you'd probably like him. But I think he's extremely dangerous, especially when he's working with young people. . . .

"All my earlier material dealt with that experience. Not exclusively—but it was all informed with pain transformed into anger. It's like in that first song on

the album: 'There's so much inside me I don't know if it'll ever come out.' "

The first song on the album is "The Last Angry Young Man." It deals with his family's reaction to his coming out. Was this a description of his real situation?

"Essentially. I didn't use their exact words. But it's a paraphrase. It was kind of like at first they would say, go ahead. But inside them: he'll go back to Hatterer. He'll go back and see he's really not that way.

"In that therapy I was in, in order to have feelings for women, I was supposed to reduce them to total sex objects. Hatterer would yell things like 'Fuck that cunt!'—reducing woman to cunt. Which isn't too cool, because I have trouble enough accepting *all* people as people. He just made it worse. . . .

"Now, strangely enough, now that I have come out, and openly declared that I'm gay, I have a very strong relationship with a woman. I wouldn't say it was a sexual relationship. Sometimes it is. Off and on. But the important things is that I'm able to appreciate her as a human being. . . .

"I'm functioning bisexually, but I would still label myself as homosexual because my sexual priorities, and my love and romantic feelings are for men. If we have to identify ourselves with labels. But I've found that I was capable of experiencing sex with a woman."

At this point the conversation touched on the James A. Wechsler column quoted earlier.

"It was really a brave thing for Wechsler to print a letter from a 17-year-old. People think, 'Oh, well, someone molested him when he was eight.' This will make them think a little. See that it's not that way. . . . That article really got to me. I'm not as politically minded as I was—but that article brings me back to the fact of all that torture, and self-denial, and self-hatred. And it's all so fucking unnecessary.

"I'm very conscious of that when I write my songs. If when I was fourteen or fifteen, I could have heard someone I respect, who was gay, sing love songs, hate songs, anything—it would have meant something. I was into Dylan. If there'd been someone like that—who was gay—it would really have made a difference.

"I won't say that's my intention in

writing. I didn't do it for altruistic reasons. But I like to think that somehow those kids out there will be able to identify with my material, and maybe benefit from it a little. . . .

"Now, I'm getting to the point where I don't need to say, 'Hey, I'm gay! Watch out, I'm gonna fuck a man tonight!' I don't need that anymore. I almost boxed myself in, in the beginning, by writing exclusively about gay oppression and so on. Now I find myself writing about a host of other subjects. Sometimes the fact that I'm gay gets into it—but as part of the whole picture. And having gotten away from writing gay political songs has been very good for me musically. I'm employing other types of music and writing about other things. . . .

"My musical influences? Well, Dylan gave us all the freedom to write about what we wanted. I guess my main influences—very strongly in the beginning—were Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell. 'Bitter Feast' on my album is my setting of a Leonard Cohen poem. . . . Tom Paxton, too. A good story writer. Jacques Brel. Musical influences range from Frank Sinatra—I used to really dig him—to classical things on piano—Chopin. Joni Mitchell I appreciate more than being influenced by her. I really don't listen to much music in my own idiom. Some Paul Simon stuff. But I've touched base with all types of music.

"I haven't myself written with that much diversity. When I have an opportunity to really produce an album, I think that'll be reflected more strongly.

"The thing I strive for most in a song is some kind of coming together of lyric and melody—into what the song is, rather than what a lyric is or what a melody is. You can't really separate the two in a good song. It's not like I could get a lyric in my head, write six lines, and then set them to music. The melodic line will come to me, and I use that as a springboard. Take it from there and work on it till I'm satisfied, which is almost never.

"Now it's a matter of trying to jump out of my own skin. See other people's perspectives. Using the second person in lyrics as opposed to 'I-I-I'. It's useful, even when you're talking to yourself, and especially when you're down on yourself and don't even want to use 'I' because you're too angry and ashamed.

"I've found that in earlier experience, I'd get so down I'd have to take guitar in hand and turn it into a song. I wound up just wallowing. It's only later, rationally putting it into a song, that makes it effective. Most of the effective works by people I admire are tinged with pain. A lot of my more effective material has that . . . but I try not to view my life in terms of happy and unhappy . . . Leonard Cohen once said he feels most of the greatest products of our time have a pathological tone. . . . I agree somewhat, but not totally. . . . It depends.

"With me, the pain and unhappiness is a trigger mechanism. I can't write then. But once I'm out of the autistic state, and can look back on it, then I can write more clearly. I know I can't write a total song in that involved state."

When I look for words to try to sum up Michael Cohen, I really find there aren't any. That's what makes him exciting. He's still in the process of becoming, striving to shape his life as well as his songs into a form that has meaning as well as order.



A Young Poet-Singer Who Happens to be Gay: Steven Grossman

An encounter with Steven Grossman can be a rather shattering experience. At least it was for me. I'm not used to people being so thoroughly honest. Not at first meeting, anyway. But honest he is. Sometimes unnervingly honest. Ask him a question, and you get a straight answer. Perhaps straighter than you bargained for. My first reaction was to feel protective toward him: for anyone to be that open, that vulnerable, that defenseless, is downright dangerous—especially if he happens to be gay.

But then it gradually dawned on me: He's not really defenseless at all. His very openness disarms. ("My defense is to relate my experience—and let you

make what you will of it.") And he's also tough. With a sensibility as acute as his, he'd have to be. But he wears his armor inside. On the surface, he seems shy, a bit disorganized, uncertain, and painfully self-conscious. But somehow, way down where it really counts, there's a solid core of knowledge and certainty about what he wants and believes.

His first record album, "Caravans Tonight," on Mercury Records, is straightforwardly, almost defiantly gay, and extraordinarily personal. Even the advertising proclaimed his sexual identity: He has been billed as "a young singer who happens to be gay." (This proved to be strong stuff in some quar-

ters: The *Advocate* printed the ad—but *After Dark* refused it, stipulating that an ad containing the word “gay” was not acceptable.)

But it has all paid off for him. The often highly critical *Rolling Stone* gave him a review that was downright lyrical, and even the staid *New York Times* (under the rather forbidding headline “Grossman Offers Homosexual Songs”) conceded that “Here are real efforts to compose love songs and set down personal impressions from a homosexual perspective. . . . Mostly they are of a quality that enables them to transcend narrow categorizations and to appeal to an audience beyond their specific subculture.”

It’s heady progress for a young man who just four years ago was student body president at Erasmus High School in Brooklyn, where he grew up in a family of several children. (“Originally there were eight of us, but we got it down to five. Two were put up for adoption and one died.”) He started to work, at age fifteen, as a child-care worker in an orphanage, and, until he began to make a living from his music, he worked at everything from garbage collecting to market research. But it’s best to let him tell his own story.

“I started writing when I was in high school. Every year there was a musical comedy—it was a sort of competition between the grades. It was called ‘Sing’. I wrote lyrics for popular songs for that. And they were very successful, in that context. I had written a few songs earlier—but they were trash, really—with one or two melody exceptions. Mainly they were just forced, because I really had nothing to say.

“I had a few primal experiences with homosexuality, when I was little and when I was growing up, but I didn’t do anything about being gay till I was in college. I’d always sort of assumed that if I was going to be gay, I’d have to be like all the stereotypes. You know, effeminate. But then I was told also that there was another type. The machismo thing. I thought that meant I’d have to be one or the other.”

(This confusion still leaves its marks: In conversation, Steven sometimes tends to ricochet from one self-image to another, still trying to shake off the stereotypes and define for himself just what he is.)

“The experience that propelled me into coming out was seeing a guy who was dressed like me at a political demonstration. Not a gay demonstration. He was holding hands with another man. That really shook me up. It made me really consider for the first time that I might really be homosexual.

“Then, when I was in college, I met a man I assumed was gay. I avoided him. Tried not to associate or be near him. But one night he offered to give me a ride from Marlboro, Vermont, to Albany to catch a plane to visit Bonnie.”

(Bonnie Samet is a woman who has figured prominently in Steven’s life. “Song to Bonnie” was written for her, and she was instrumental in creating the design and some of the artwork for his first album cover.)

“On the way to Albany, we started to talk. He was into Laura Nyro and I was, too. . . . The next week, when I got back, he invited me to his room, and we made it. And it was terrible. I had a tremendous guilt reaction. Tore the sheets off the bed, and kept taking showers. I called Bonnie up and asked her to marry me. She’s a really hip woman. Next day I went to a therapist, but he was no help either. . . .

“My first feeling, when I really came out, was rage. When I realized how much brainwashing I’d been subjected to from my parents, and my grandparents, from the movies, from every aspect of society, I was furious. I was living with this woman who was active in the women’s movement, and I guess her attitudes affected mine. I wanted to make Gays entirely separate from straights. I didn’t want to have anything to do with straight men. . . .”

Does he still feel that way?

“Well, certain kinds of straight men I don’t want to have anything to do with. The kind who’d rather not see me doing what I do and living the way I live. . . . And I want to avoid being attracted to straights—and straight lifestyles.”

He left college after one year, with an ambition to be an actor, and planned to study at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. (He did, eventually, work with the New York Free Theatre, doing street theatre.) To earn money to go to the Playhouse, he took a job at Coney Island as a “stab and bagger”—a garbage collector on the beach.

“It was during that time that Bonnie



left for England. Before she left, she told me I had to get my head together. ‘Come out. Just decide. Do something.’ That’s when I began to develop a political consciousness about working with straight men. I couldn’t do it anymore. I quit my job and went on welfare.

“And then there was a year I just—spent at home. My main release was music. And I guess that more or less shaped me musically. I listened to a lot of Laura Nyro.

“But my biggest influence, I guess, is Joni Mitchell. I believe that in everything she sings about, she’s truthful. Nine Simone is marvelous—able to be strong and yet approachable. Aretha Franklin blows me away completely. I could listen to her for weeks. Among the male singers, I like soft singers. Eric Anderson, James Taylor. And Stevie Wonder . . . Donovan? I just can’t take him. He really grates on me. I don’t believe in sweetness and light and flower power.

“During that period I started writing songs again. . . . The songs on the album



come from a time when I was flipping out. Really confused. . . . But for the first time I could write about what I felt and not what I thought other people wanted to hear. . . . The songs on the next album will be calmer, happier, more together, reflective of the change in my life. . . ."

How did he manage the transition from staying at home writing songs, to making an album for Mercury?

"I acquired some managers by answering a want ad. And did a whole bunch of gigs at places like Folk City, and the Metro, and Max's Kansas City,

him off, and got out as soon as possible. One line in that song, 'Don't ever give candy to a stranger,' has upset a lot of people. And the writers from the gay magazines, they say, what's wrong with giving candy to a stranger? Well, nothing, I guess, if that's what you're looking for. I wasn't. It was no outlet for me. I just wanted one specific person. People say I'm pro-monogamy because when I wrote all that material I was pro one-to-one relationships.

"But I've been in a lover situation for the past year. It's been very enlightening. I believe now I have a different per-

tain amount of musical comedy tradition. And of course it's gay. I like the word 'gay' because it's quick and specific. I feel almost oppressed when writers call me 'a homosexual singer' like the guy in the *Times*. Basically it's music about myself and my friends and relations. It's not anything I sit down and do at a given time and a given place. I wince when people call me an artist. Because I can't just sit down and turn out a piece of material. It doesn't happen like that. If told to do it, I respond negatively and avoid doing it. I don't like authority.

"It's always been a pure thing for me. A release of emotions. A catharsis of sorts. A chance to sing things to people that I couldn't say to them.

"Consequently I'm always worried if there'll be enough material for another album. . . . Somehow there's a relationship between being unsatisfied and being able to write. The need to be thirsty, depressed, or unhappy. I've been comparatively happy for the last year, and I don't like to sit down, pen in hand, and analyze it. I just want to feel it.

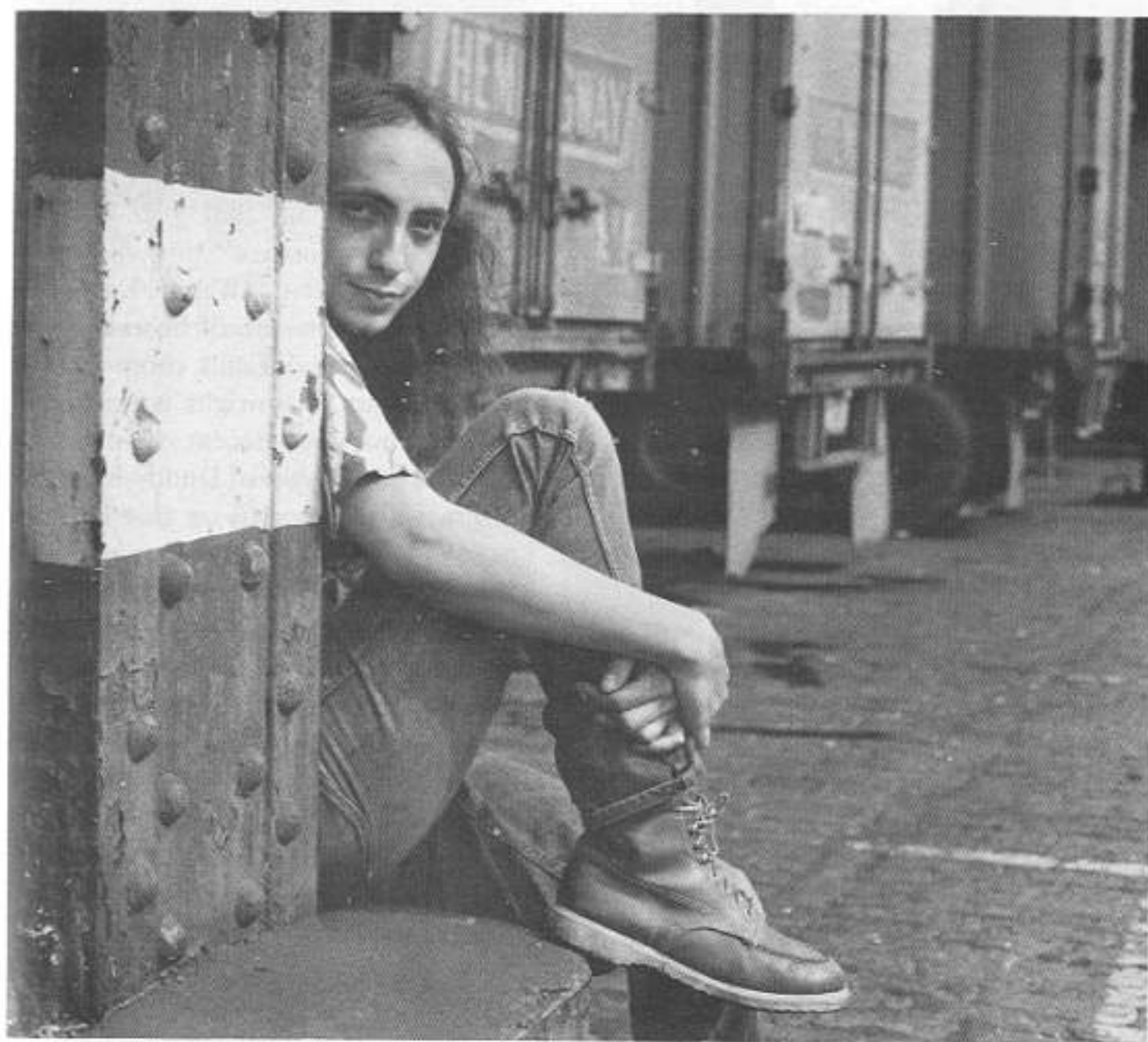
"I'm very unconfident about writing. It's very difficult for me. I was very self-conscious, initially. Too much so. Worrying about the impression I give of myself. If I'm too esoteric. If people can relate to me. It's really terrible being interviewed and having people analyze me. Interviewers ask me about things I've never even thought about. And then I get even more self-conscious.

"I'm still petrified . . . of writing letters. I feel guilty about the fan letters I get. I should write back to people who are interested enough to write to me. But I can't. . . . And I seldom read any kind of prose at all. . . .

"I'm under contract to do five more records. One a year for the next five years. It petrifies me. I have one song I really love, and three others I just finished. I have to work on them some more. Something about them doesn't feel right yet. I hope I'll be able to get together enough new material. I don't know what company pressure is going to be like. I'm really very naive. I'm afraid I might be forced to turn out an album of schlock. . . .

"On the first album there are some things I'd do differently if I had it to do over. . . . It took me a long time to be

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while they tried to sell me to the record companies. . . .

"'Christopher's Blues' belongs to that period when my romance with Austin was on the rocks. . . . It was about my experience of being picked up for the first time. This guy approached me, on Christopher Street, and asked me to have a beer. And I wound up going home with him. He just sort of assumed I would be fucked. He was into an incredible butch trip. He said, 'I'm going to rape you, baby.' I don't know much about—I mean, I'm not really a fighter—but no one's going to rape me. I held

spective on my needs and what kind of relationship I'd look for—if indeed I would look. I've learned more about the value of friends. When you're on the prowl you don't relate much to friends. Other relations are nodding acquaintances.

"In a lover situation, you can concentrate more on the people around you. I've become closer to people who were in my life before. . . . But I've also learned how much I need the street."

I asked Steven how he'd describe his own music.

"Well, it's folk-oriented. With a cer-

special report - films

THE APPRENTICESHIP of duddy KRAVITZ

by Ted Flagg



Theatre critic Walter Kerr commented in one of his essays that the most difficult chore facing a contemporary playwright is persuading his audience that decent people exist. *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* is a film which succeeds on that level. Its people do have a fundamental decency: they want to do the "right" thing. They don't often succeed, as a matter of fact, but they try. That alone is enough to set the movie apart from most of the stuff that's making the rounds these days. And if that isn't enough, it is also hilarious along the way.

Duddy Kravitz himself (marvelously played by Richard Dreyfuss) is a young Jewish go-getter from Montreal, with a desperate need to be "somebody." His need for recognition and respect drives him to try the most outlandish schemes, and to behave with utter ruthlessness toward those around him—even those he most cares about. But we can't condemn him because we understand him too well. It's impossible not to feel for him, and even to like him, despite the havoc he wreaks.

He longs for the approval of his widowed taxi-driver father who has filled his head with tall tales of get-rich-quick schemes. But it's Duddy's brother that the father cherishes, and puts through medical school by pimping on the side. Duddy's uncle, a well-to-do Marxist and sweat-shop owner, also prefers the docile, snobbish brother. Only



Left: In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, from Paramount, Richard Dreyfuss is seen in the title role of a young man driven by an insatiable desire to become "somebody." Far Left Center: Duddy is a young Jewish boy in Montreal, growing up as the very second son of his widowed father (Jack Warden). Left Center: Fired by ambition to become a landowner, Duddy works as a waiter in a resort hotel—and quickly discovers the only way to get his orders promptly is to bribe the chef. Below Left: Yvette, a waitress at the hotel (Micheline Lanctot), is attracted to Duddy and allows him to involve her in an ambitious land-development scheme. Above: Duddy, Yvette and Duddy's film-director partner (Denholm Elliott) celebrate the success of their first film venture. Right: Duddy attempts to float a loan from an epileptic friend (Randy Quaid) to further his land development scheme. Below: Duddy finally succeeds with his ambitious land development scheme—only to discover he has lost the respect of those who mean the most to him—including his grandfather (Zvee Scooler).



the Zayda (grandfather) adores Duddy—but tells him "a man without land is nobody."

Duddy's efforts to acquire land involve him in a bizarre series of projects: working as a waiter in a resort hotel; launching a disastrous afterhours roulette game; dope smuggling; pinball machines; and most improbable of all, a partnership with a pretentious but alcoholic British film director (Denholm Elliott) in a company that specializes in filming weddings and bar mitzvahs. (The first film they produce—on the bar mitzvah of a junk dealer's son—is the comic high point of the movie.)

Richard Dreyfuss is clearly one of the four or five really top-notch young

actors around. He never lets us forget the fierce but battered pride and utter vulnerability behind Duddy's chutzpah. And he can toss off a seemingly casual line so that it lands with the force of a solar plexus punch. He's stage trained, and it shows: he can make his own transitions, without relying on the camera or the director to make them for him.

Director Ted Kotcheff has given the film a texture and sense of reality that are rich and evocative, and assembled a supporting cast that is well-nigh perfect. Micheline Lanctot is splendid as Yvette. Randy Quaid (of *The Last Detail*) is heartbreakingly funny as a young epileptic who comes to terrible grief as a result of his misguided trust in Duddy.

And Joseph Wiseman is quietly superb as the successful but childless uncle. (His final scene with Duddy is profoundly moving in its low-key simplicity.) Jack Warden makes the father a splendid old hooligan, and Zvee Scooler suggests a powerful spirit in a feeble frame as the Zayda. Denholm Elliott is stylish and wonderfully demented as the boozy, arty, black-listed film director.

Mordecai Richler's screenplay, based on his novel (as adapted by Lionel Chetwynd), is impeccable, and director and cast have realized it faithfully. The result is a good, solid, nourishing, meat-and-potatoes film, beside which most of the other current offerings seem like so much beer and benzedrine.



TOURBIKING IN SAN LUIS OBISPO



Rick Lewis had only a quick, mocking laugh for the camper that rumbled by us. In his opinion, one shared by me, if you really want to see this country, the only way to do it is to leave all the trappings of civilization firmly behind. The best method to see as much as possible, at the same time getting an incredible feeling of fresh, clean, wind-fed freedom, is to set out astride a big bike and just let it take you. This is just the kind of adventure that appeals to Rick's athletic nature. It's one that showed up early in his life as a consuming interest in baseball, finally culminated in his playing pro-ball in the major leagues for Detroit and his dream team, the Dodgers. Sadly, an injury forced his early retirement, ending that boyhood dream. He reset-

tled in his hometown of San Luis Obispo where he quickly became very active in community Little League.

Where else better to begin roughing it than in Rick's familiar stomping grounds, San Luis Obispo. This history-steeped, gemlike little town, set in the very center of the California coast, offers everything appealing to the visitor. It's accessible enough to attract a small, steady stream of tourists, while still offering the charm of a rustic, earlier-times California and remote wilderness areas to those sated with the neon life to the north and south. An open trip on big tour bikes with just a few basics . . . sleeping bags, full canteens and a couple of old, serviceable, cooking pots . . . was the order of the day.

Before we started, a quick stop had

to be made to collect Rick's brother, Chuck, along with his gear. He'd be joining Rick for the jaunt. Even though both guys knew the area very well and were both excellent bikers, they knew it was absolutely essential to undertake a trip such as this one with someone else along. This is most important to remember if you want to plan such a little outing. Always take a friend, no matter how good a rider you are or how familiar the area.

First, a quick stop by Yamaha of San Luis Obispo to secure the motorcycles. The friendly, cheerful co-owner, John Motley, went over all the choices offered by that fine line of cycles very carefully with the guys. Finally, they settled on the TX650, turning down the 500 as not quite powerful enough for





their needs and the 750 as a bit heavy and rather unworkable in off-road situations. Yamaha's TX650 fitted the bill nicely. It has most of the bigger bike's advantages, without all that weight and nearly none of the smaller cycle's drawbacks. The one big thing going for it is comfort. It can get speeds of over 100 mph easily. The front disc braking system is efficient and safe . . . breaking at 46 feet doing 31 mph. The huge seat offers plenty of room for both the rider and another passenger or lots of supplies. A powerful, four-stroke cam engine, that is virtually indestructible, even has a five-speed transmission, very important on a long trip, such as this. Naturally, the gas mileage is great plus and the large capacity tank, four gallons, makes frequent gas stops unnecessary. Rick and Chuck each chose that one special bike with the just-right feel for them. With a goodbye wave of thanks to John, they were off.

It's amazing that no matter how well you think you know a place, there's always constant discovery. Rick had decided we should begin the trip in the heart of the city at the historical Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, built in 1772. The first slow, lazy circle through the bright, neat, small city was followed with another widened circle and contin-

ued with ever-widening circles along the famous Path of History, past all the famous points of interest in the open, friendly town.

Increasing the circling ride, the bikes and their riders finally made their way through the foothills and surrounding lakes, then back down again to nearby Morro Bay. The stopping and checking of this and that point became more and more frequent. Rick was very definite that a trip like this shouldn't be rushed and, therefore, wasn't something for anyone with an eye on the clock. He feels that in order to enjoy an outing in nature you just can't take time for time. If you don't have this easy attitude you're liable to miss so much. For example, while at Morro Bay the guys just couldn't resist a trip out on the long pier, not really a part of our agenda. It was well worth it. Chuck even managed to locate a delightful little restaurant that specialized in fresh-caught seafood. A leisurely, late lunch helped prepare them for the next leg of the trip.

The last, long circle of the day began on the freeway then doubled back across wide fields of rolling farmland. It brought them to the San Luis Creek, a trickle of water that skips through the center of the small town. They followed it almost to its source in the Los Padres

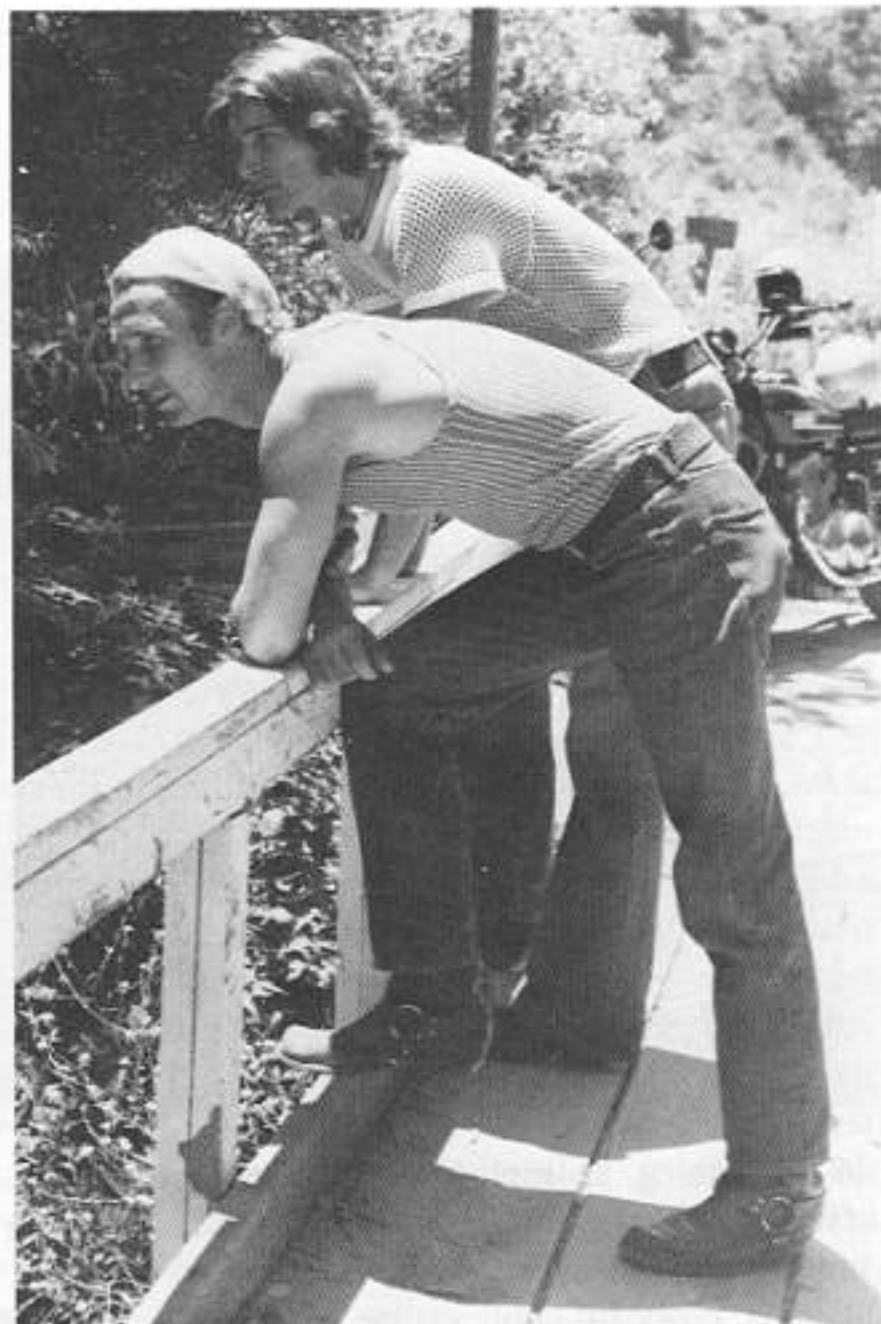
National Forest. Naturally there were more pauses along the way, like a shouted "Hello" to a startled horse and a few checkouts of the creek itself.

The sky was rapidly darkening when they discovered what they'd been looking for along the creek bed, a semi-protected clearing that was perfect for spending the night in refreshing, under-the-stars sleep. A fire was soon lighted, producing needed warmth and welcome, steaming mugs of fragrant coffee. The sleeping bags were quickly unrolled and put to swift use. The day with all its pleasures had brought weariness. Sleep was immediate.

There's only one thing that can even begin to compare to sleeping in nature and that's awakening in it. The guys bounded out of bed at the first hint of light. Rick located a tumbling waterfall just a short distance up the stream. They raced to it wildly and splashed right in for a chilly, early morning shower, nature's way. They followed that up with a cooked-out, fortifying breakfast. Then it all began again, another day on the bikes, wider circles circling other circles, on, up into the mountains and back down again to the beaches. Discovery coupled with rediscovery.

That's the way it is on a bike trip in San Luis Obispo. Now, you may think





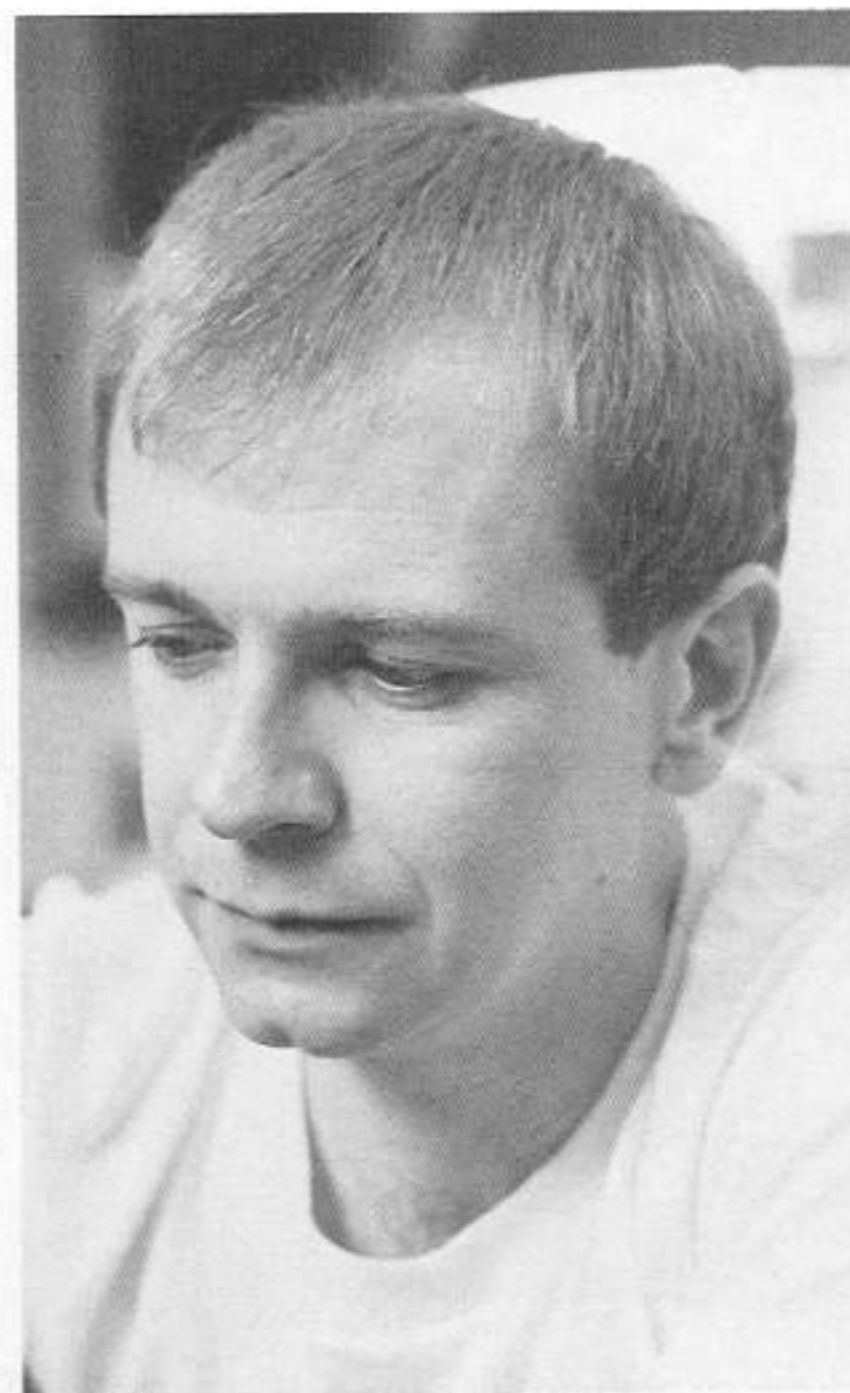
you'll never find so much to see and do around your own area. Wait. Just give it a try. I'm sure you'll be surprised and amazed at how much that's new and exciting and it can be found if you'll only unencumber yourself. Hop astride a big bike or, if you can't ride, hop on in back of a friend's . . . then just go looking for yourself.





THE QUIET AND SCANDALOUS WORLD OF TERRENCE MCNALLY

by Neal Weaver
photos by Ken Howard



The place was the Playwrights' Unit at the Actors' Studio in New York City. The time, December, 1962. The occasion: a workshop production of a play called *There Is Something Out There* by a blond, baby-faced, 24-year-old playwright named Terrence McNally. (Later the title was to be changed to *And Things That Go Bump in the Night*.)

The house was packed with the cream of the New York theatre's actors, playwrights and directors. Expectations seemed high. A large invited audience had attended the dress rehearsal the night before and reports were enthusiastic. Veteran director John Stix had put the production together, and assembled a cast of very capable actors, headed by Madeleine Sherwood, Ben Piazza, Barbara Dana, and Hal England. Terrence himself was a source of interest in that he had earlier worked as a stage manager at the Studio, and was therefore known to many of the members. And there was also the fact that he was sharing an apartment with Edward Albee, who was then riding the crest of his Broadway success with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*. To further intrigue

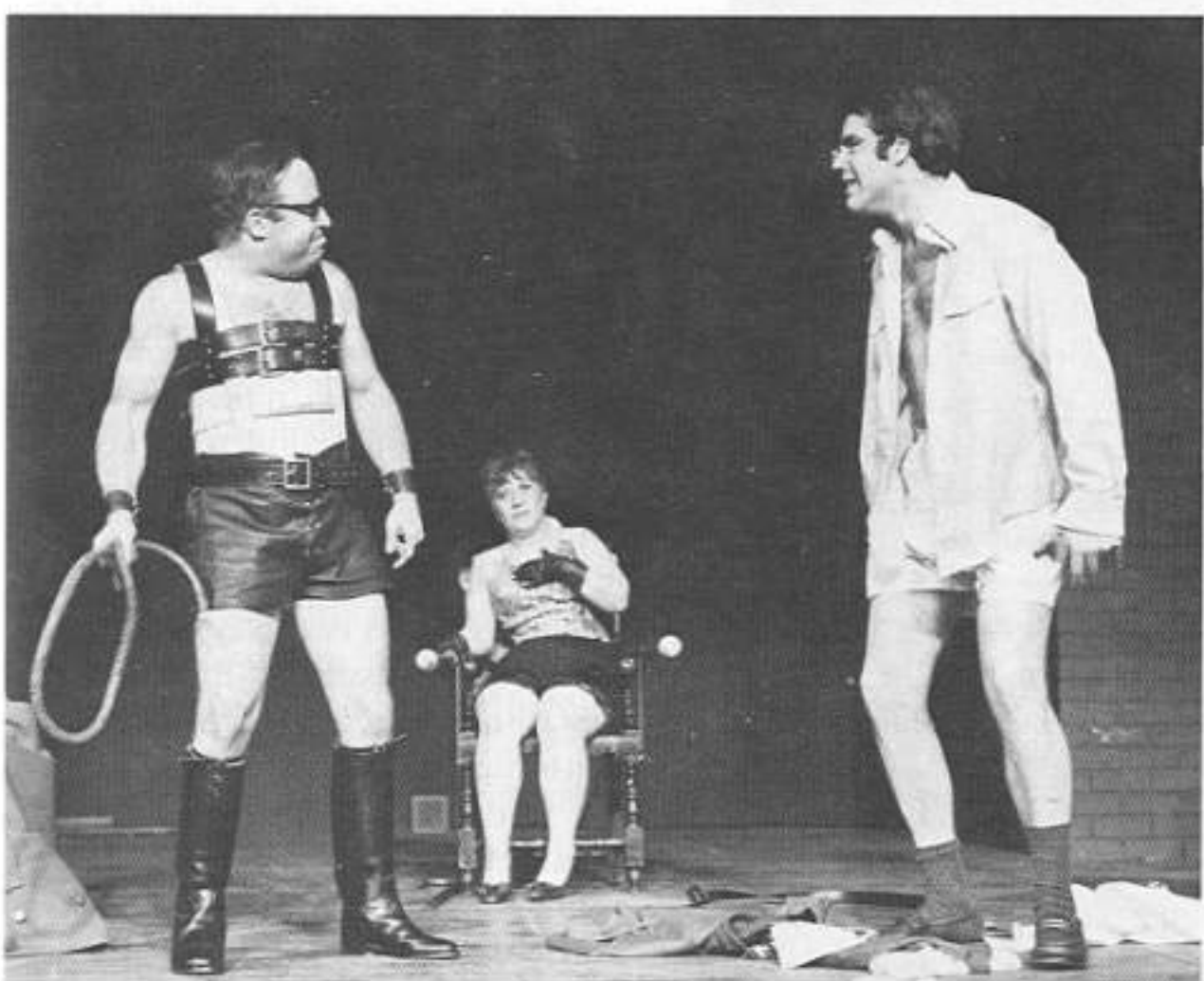
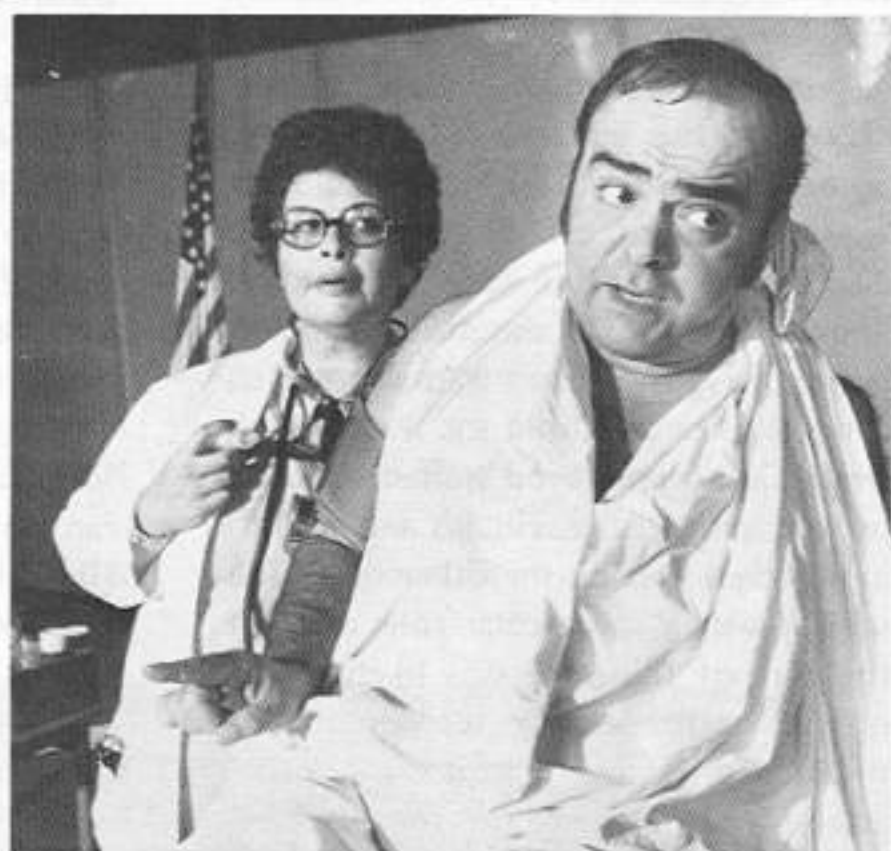
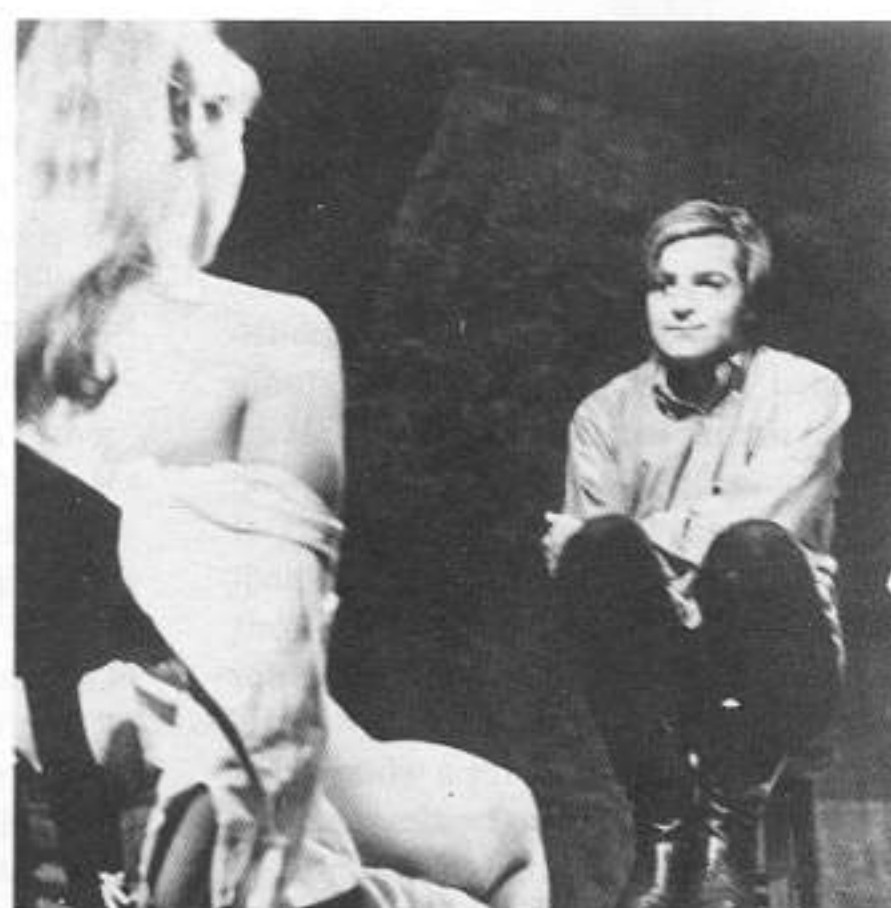
the audience, there was a rumor going around that one of the studio's actors had accidentally walked in on a rehearsal of the production and discovered the cast engaged in shooting pornographic photographs! (As it turned out, the photos were props for the show, and they were a good deal less than pornographic, but the rumor served to make the audience both eager and a little nervous.)

Whatever the audience expected from this clean-cut, innocent-looking young playwright, they got more than they bargained for: the play's later title may have come from a Scottish prayer, but the plot and the characters were straight out of Krafft-Ebing.

The play concerned a spectacularly bizarre family, headed by a flamboyant ex-opera singer named Ruby (Miss Sherwood), which includes her son, Sigfrid, a sort of metaphysical hustler; and her teenaged daughter Lakme, whose pet occupation is recording on tape and film her brother's dealings with his pickups, male and female. When the brother brings home an idealistic and masochistic young protest marcher named Clarence, the whole family gears for action. Brother lures him to bed, while sister

photographs and tapes the encounter. While the film is developing, Clarence is subjected to all manner of humiliations, including having all his clothes stolen, so that he is reduced to putting on a dress of Ruby's. At length, Ruby joins the game, and Clarence is invited to see a slide show. He politely accepts, blithely unaware that he is to be the star of the show. But when the slides are projected, before the assembled family (those much-talked-about rehearsal photos!), Clarence is so mortified, distressed and embarrassed that he dashes out of the house, and is electrocuted when he collides with the electric fence that surrounds the house.

Today, in New York City, the play would probably not raise an eyebrow. But at that point in time, plays that examined homosexuality and the nuances of sadomasochistic behavior were few and far between. During the performance, the atmosphere was electric. (I happened to be the stage manager for the production, and so had an excellent vantage point to observe the proceedings from the light booth. And I must say, the play had shocked me. But I'd had several rehearsals to get used to it,



Top Left: Eileen Heckart, as the flamboyant ex-diva Ruby settles down with her son, Sigfrid (Robert Drivas), to cross-examine a new "guest" in the Broadway production of *And Things That Go Bump in the Night* (photo by Friedman-Abeles). Top Right: Robert Drivas played a kidnapper, and Sally Kirkland was his not terribly unwilling victim in *Sweet Eros*—which was one of the first off-Broadway plays to make extensive use of nudity in the dramatic action. Center Left: Richard Marr as the Man, and Joe Ponazecki as the Young Man in *Witness* which concerned an attempt to assassinate the president of the United States (photo by Betty Nettis). Center Right: Elaine Shore was the tough WAC Sergeant and James Coco the unwilling draftee in *Next* which was presented originally with Elaine May's *Adaptation* (photo by Friedman-Abeles). Above Left: Sorrell Brooke and Charlotte Rae played a leather couple into S&M, and David Klein portrayed a homosexual in *Noon*, which concerned a quartet who answer an ad in a personal column—but find themselves terribly mismatched when they meet (photo by Friedman-Abeles). Above Right: Susan Browning is the Cowgirl, with Charlotte Rae, Michael Sachs and Beeson Carroll in the background, in *Whiskey* which was part of St. Clements' theatre program in 1973.

and decide for myself that there was a real writer at work.)

Still, at the intermission which preceded the critique and discussion of the play, there were few indications of the storm that was about to break. It's true, a couple of the more conventional-minded female members of the studio were pacing about nervously, looking very threatened, and telling anyone who would listen, "I don't *need* this sort of thing." But the discussion started innocently enough. Terrence sat at the front of the room, waiting expectantly for comments—and parliamentary procedures were maintained for a while.

But it soon began to be clear that the play had upset and angered a number of people. There were others who liked the play, or at least were rational in their responses. But rationality didn't stand a chance in the hullabaloo that ensued. Someone asked actress Madeleine Sherwood how she felt about the play. She leapt to her feet and launched into an impassioned speech about how she hated the play, and hadn't wanted to do it, and how sick and tired she was of playwrights who portrayed women—and especially mothers—as villains and castrating bitches. But on the other hand, she said, it *was* a spectacular role, and not the sort of thing she was likely to be offered a chance at in the commercial theatre, so she agreed to do it. Another actress (not involved in the performance) leapt to her feet, blazing with rage and with tears streaming down her cheeks. She obviously viewed the play with absolute loathing, but she was not coherent enough to make it clear just why.

Edward Albee was muttering grimly that it was a mystery to him why, in the year 1962, the word homosexual couldn't be mentioned in public without creating mass hysteria.

And at the front of the room, Terrence sat, looking at the audience with a rather diffident perplexity, seemingly baffled by the furore he'd unleashed.

Everybody was getting into the act now, and we were fast approaching a general melee, when Broadway director Alan Schneider (he'd just directed Albee's *Virginia Woolf*) managed to make himself heard above the din.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am shocked! I am shocked! That a group of

supposedly sophisticated, creative people—actors, writers, and directors—members of my profession—should heap abuse on a fellow artist simply because he chooses to depict a particular aspect of human behavior!" He talked on, spreading oil on troubled waters, and shaming his hearers, if not into good sense, at least into good manners or silence. And the meeting broke up.

When *And Things That Go Bump in the Night* was produced on Broadway in 1965, under the direction of Michael Cacoyannis, with Eileen Heckart as Ruby, the operatic mother; Robert Drivas as the hustler son; Susan Anspach as the shutter-happy daughter; and Marco St. John as Clarence, the victim, the controversy was greater still. During previews, audiences loved the show. But the critics attacked with a vengeance, and there were tales told to the effect that on the second night the audience was so angry it stormed the stage and tried to pull the set down. According to Terrence, nothing quite that violent happened, but there were incidents:

"In the middle of the second performance, a man jumped out of his seat, ran down to the stage, grabbed Eileen Heckart's train, and screamed, 'Stop this play! It's obscene! It's offensive!' At the end of every performance, the audience was split fifty-fifty. Half of them were shouting, 'Bravo!' and the other half were booing. We even had pickets in front of the theatre, urging people to come and see the show. A lot of people thought I'd paid them to be there, but they were total strangers. I don't know who they were. One night I went out to speak to them. They asked me who I was. I told them I was the playwright, but they didn't believe me."

To keep the show alive, producers Ted Mann and Joseph E. Levine decided to put all tickets on sale for \$1. The theatre was packed with people, many of whom had never been to the theatre before. (Ultimately more than 20,000 people saw the show, counting preview audiences.)

In 1968, Terrence scored another *succès de scandale* with *Sweet Eros* in which Robert Drivas played a young kidnapper who was afraid of being loved, but lonely, and therefore was holding Sally Kirkland as his prisoner. The *scandale* was due to the fact that Sally spent most of the show tied to a

chair wearing nothing but a bit of Max Factor pancake. (And *Sweet Eros* is still upsetting people: just this year the cast of a Boston production was hauled into court on obscenity charges.) But as a result of all the furor, few critics paid much attention to what the author was really up to.

And so it has gone. This young, serious-minded playwright with the incredibly innocent face seemed to have a knack for shaking people up, and shocking his audiences. But he's no pornographer. And it wasn't only the subject matter of his plays that disturbed. It was his whole view of the world that a lot of people weren't ready for: a clear-eyed, critical view that penetrated current hypocrisies and stripped off a lot of comfortable masks. There's a speech in *Things That Go Bump* that sort of sums it up: "We deal with what's left us . . . not what we'd like to add to the mythology. It's a subtraction process and if the answer is zero . . . that's okay, too." It might be the credo of a whole generation of young writers who were committed to finding out what was true and what was not, and were determined not to fall back on reassuring popular clichés about what people "ought to be."

It wasn't until *Next* was produced off-Broadway that the world began to catch up with Terrence, and a new young audience had appeared capable of relating to his vision. He'd had other plays, off-Broadway as well as on television, and his works were proving successful in schools and regional theatres. But *Next* was the first real commercial hit. That production, directed by Elaine May (on a double bill with her own play, *Adaptation*) and with James Coco as the embattled hero, finally made him an "established" playwright.

This year, his new play, *Bad Habits*, proved so successful off-Broadway that it was transferred to Broadway. And another play, *Tubs*, produced last season at the Yale Repertory Theatre, is tentatively scheduled for a Broadway opening in November.

The baby-faced playwright has come of age. (And he's probably damn glad of it: it must be disconcerting for a working playwright to find lady columnists referring to him as a "cutie-pie"!)

* * * *

Terrence McNally, like the hero of

his play, *Where Has Tommy Flowers Gone?*, was born in St. Petersburg, Florida, on November 3, 1939. His parents were expatriate New Yorkers, who soon moved on to Corpus Christi, Texas, so he doesn't remember Florida at all.

"I had a high-school English teacher—a remarkable man who was most influential in my life. He was interested in me, and encouraged me. Prior to that I'd intended to go to the University of Texas. But I was inspired to come east. My best friend and I both applied at both Yale and Columbia. We were both accepted at both places. But it seemed ridiculous for us, having been close friends all through high school, to come all that way to be roommates in college. We wanted to open ourselves up to new influences. So we flipped a coin. He got Yale and I got Columbia."

But at Columbia, his interest was journalism, not theatre: "I certainly didn't want to be a playwright. Ever since I was a kid, I used to write little stories and started newspapers. I think if journalism had been more interesting to me when I first started out in it... but my jobs were always straight news stories and I was always more attracted to the features..."

Still, it was at Columbia that he gained his first playwriting experience: "I read one day in the school paper that they were looking for someone to write the varsity show. I took a shot at it and it worked. That was in 1960. The show was called *A Little Bit Different*. There was a pony ballet in it, so you can imagine how serious it was. Then when I was graduating I got a \$6,000 grant for being the best English major of the year. I took that money and went off to Mexico and started to write seriously."

There was also a period when he went back to Corpus Christi, and worked as a journalist on the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*.

Eventually he wound up back in New York again, where he obtained the job as stage manager at the Actors' Studio. The late Molly Kazan, wife of director Elia Kazan, and at that time moderator of the studio's Playwrights Unit, asked him if he'd like a job as tutor for the two teenaged sons of a friend of hers who were planning a trip around the world and needed an older companion. The friend turned out to be John Steinbeck, and Terrence took the job.

"They knew their way around better than I did. And I looked younger than they did. But the boys were great and the trip, which lasted a year, was fantastic."

Somehow, despite all of this activity, he was able to finish his first play, called *This Side of the Door*, as well as *There Is Something Out There*.

By chance, the performance at the Actors' Studio shared a bill with a play directed by John Strasberg, son of Lee Strasberg, the Studio's guiding light. Italian film director Franco Zeffirelli was in New York getting ready to go into rehearsal for his Broadway production of *Camille*, based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas, fils, in which the Strasbergs' daughter Susan was to star. Therefore, they invited Zeffirelli to the performance to see John's work—but he also saw Terrence's, with the result that Terrence was hired as an "adapter" of *Camille*.

"I usually leave that out of the biographies. Franco was looking for someone with a 'young American approach' to do rewrites. It all happened in a weekend. I got \$200 and billing for it. It was done to get experience."

Camille turned out to be one of the most spectacular flops of the season. It

was not only panned, it was practically hooted.

Shortly thereafter, I happened to be speaking to actress/writer Mary Mercier who I knew had been present for the massacre Terrence had received at the Studio after *There Is Something Out There*. "Poor Terrence!" I said.

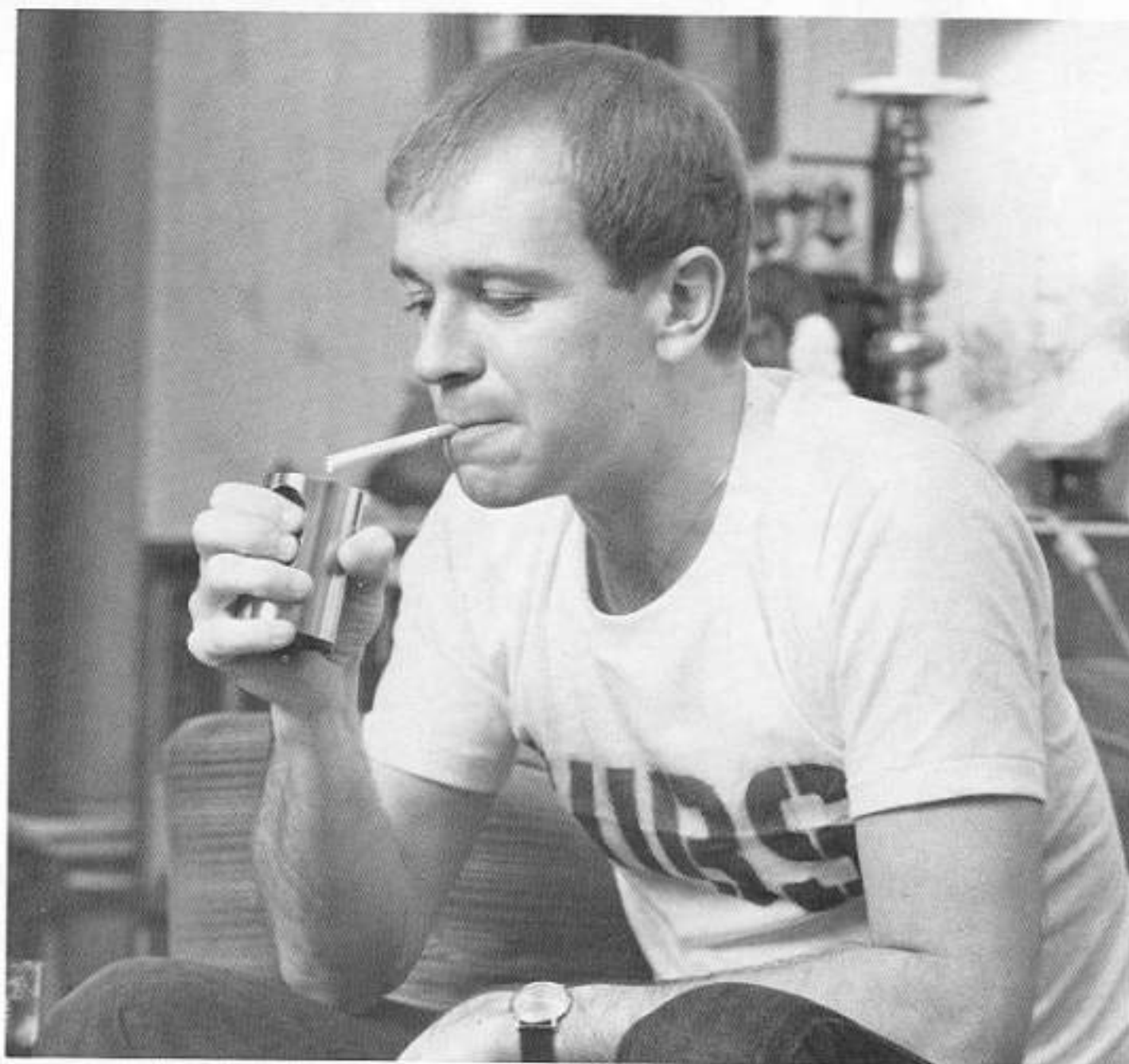
"Why do you say that?" she asked.

"Well, to be stuck with a spectacular flop like *Camille* right on top of the shellacking he got at the Studio."

"Darling, I was in *Camille*. Don't feel sorry for Terrence. Terrence is stronger than anybody. Terrence will outlast us all!"

In any case, Terrence didn't have much time to grieve. Director Alan Schneider had been impressed with *There Is Something Out There* when he saw it at the Studio, and recommended Terrence to Dr. Arthur Ballet of the Office for Advanced Drama Research at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Ballet wrote to Terrence, offering to produce the play in Minneapolis at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. The play opened there in February of 1964, under the title *And Things That Go Bump in the Night*, with a cast that included Leueen McGraith, Robert Drivas, and Joseph Chai-

Continued on Page 77



fashion

UNDERWEAR CAVALCADE

by Bill Arseneaux
photography by Dave Sands

Fashion celebrates IT's first anniversary with a review of past issues' models in their original settings—all dressed for an Underwear Cavalcade.

Underwear! How did it all begin? Well, if I were to wax historical, and I

am about to, I would have to say the first men in that early-earth environment did not reach for a figleaf. The figleaf was required posing gear of the early Italian painters. My theory is that early man used his hand to cover his "lap." Let's face it, if you were crawling

up and down over rocks and tree trunks, or running through woods with slapping tree branches, what would you do? Naturally, there was a lot of standing around and waiting for the swelling to go down—from all that friction. I can also visualize those coffee klutches—dur-



Above:

January's Jean Baille, a French/Canadian, joined Todd on our cover. Jean wears the lightweight nylon set, with the open side-vent briefs, from Germany.

Above Left:

It's July and out of Marina del Rey with Parr of Arizona. Mickey Mahanay wears Delta of poly/acrylic stripes. Don Le Douce and Jim Lovette wear two versions of Europa briefs, body-huggers of cotton/lycra spandex.

Left:

It's August and "Belle" has three best men. The location is the Reverie Playhouse, home of old musicals in Hollywood. Tall, blond Che McCaskill wears ambidexterous fly-fronts from Germany and an Israeli T-shirt with colored striping. Actor John Paul Jones reclines in Parr's Delta Rose, with its one-piece front of ribbed poly/cotton. Dwight Freeman, our resident vegetarian and chess instructor, overloads patterned nylon boxers from Spain.





ing the hunts?—and the inevitable sizing up that must have occurred, comparatively speaking.

And then the day arrived when the happy-go-luckiest man in the tribe, Sir-Kom, the head hook-baiter for all the fishermen, showed them a trick he'd learned while on night watch, some five winters ago. They didn't go hunting that day, or the next, and it was three weeks before they came back to their senses. The whole tribe almost starved. As punishment, now that the secret was no secret anymore, they smilingly cut Sir-Kom, the master-baiter, down to size. For years after, men would remember how sad they had been before that Sir-Kom session.

As their government took shape, it became obvious to the little guys that when all else was equal things suddenly became SHIP-shape (S.H.I.P.: Size Has Its Privileges), and the little guy lost. They informed the "big-cheeses" that unless everyone was considered equal, they would spin off and start anew, elsewhere with Princess T.M. as their leader. T.M. stood for Terra Mater, and legend has it she was hung like a glazed donut. However, Gen-Pat-C-Cott's reasoning won the day . . . and all the members back to the tribe. His suggestion that everyone wear the tribe's 2'x2' flag from a band at the waist was unanimously accepted. Gen later told the other leaders that now the men could run and carry their clubs as well as a spear in their newly freed hand. Soon he



had the men dressed in different colored flags and participating in activities called We-Are-Recreating, or, W.A.R. games.

It was around this time that the tribe lost Bug-A-Fey. While hunting single-file, Bug stooped over looking for tracks, but saw stars when the club behind him kept coming. Until the day he went "happy-hunting," he just lay on his stomach at the mouth of his cave and pointed at the site of the accident until his arm went tired. The flying banners were now pulled between the legs and tucked into the waistband at the back, for the tribe could ill afford any more guys laid up.

Soon the uniforms began to show signs of wear, and that is when animal skins started to appear. Some left the foxtails in the back, some tied a leg over a shoulder or both shoulders. Some just left the holes in the skins and tucked or put things through them. Oh yes, there was a good-looking six-footer named



Above:

It's September and we are in San Francisco at Buzzby's bar and dance hall on Polk(strasse). Karl Ellis, ACT student, beams out of his stretch terry/velour pouchers. Pat Lee, fashion designer, holds forth in a white jersey side-banded sling. Ron Clute, an advertising exec, hangs in there with stretch/wool briefs from Germany. All Town Squire, San Francisco.

Top Left:

The June issue threesome is Tony Alexander and Chris Wilson sporting the long and the short of lastex pouch-briefs. Rick Gutteridge goes native with a tri-cot snake-skin and all Ah Men.

Above Left:

The month was January and Todd Wayne is the name. He appeared on that cover and also in an exclusive IN TOUCH Portrait. This attractive underwear set is of waffle/polyester and from Spain.



Above:

The month is July and the trio is Don Le Douce in a faded "silk" pouch brief of elasticized cotton from Parr of Arizona. Mickey Mahanay, our biker, wears the very famous Jock-Sock from Brawn of Calif. Jim Lovette has on their catch-of-the-day net pouch/brief in jersey.

Above Right:

Another look at June and the shop of shops, at and called "8327" St. Monica Blvd. Chris Wilson is crossed in French briefs of stretch knit cotton, and his scooped T-shirt is from Spain. Tony Alexander's comfy yellow cottons are contoured in Germany, and Rick Gut-

terridge is topped in light ribbed nylon shirt with terrycloth, fly-fronts from Spain.

Below Left:

The trio from January is Todd, Jean and John Magna, who is an occasional model for Vidal Sassoon's salon. The one-piece tricot/nylon shirts-into-briefs are from J.M./Spain.

Below:

The Savoy-Tivoli, shown in September's San Fran. issue, we featured many of Pat Lee's designs. Here is his first showing of a "fun" idea—soxs with jocks to match. Pat's are green and show a lot of sense. Karl Ellis' are silver-formals from the "Hot Sox Co.," while Ron Clute traded in his red socks for a piano?



Vegas-Boy. He made his replacement out of bird skins, but was too lazy to take the feathers off. Everyone would tease him and strip off the feathers. He started carrying a large bundle of plumes on his head, and walked on his tiptoes with his hands on his hips. That seemed to stop the stripping and teasing.

One day, the tallest, darkest, handsomest, super-muscular dude came swinging into the village square. He used a vine, but swung, unfortunately, smack into a pole the tribe had left up from the dance the previous May. It was shortly before sunset that EEH-OW-OW-OW, the name he yelled out when he ran up against that pole, regained consciousness. He rose very slowly, and, bent over, he ran, fell and rolled around the village—beating and breaking doors and chairs, yelling out his name with tears in his eyes. The leaders sensed trouble similar to when the elephants were in “heat.”

About a week later, when he could talk again, he said that he wanted to make it very clear that his name was Add-Vert-Eyes, and that he was going to make their lives a whole lot better, but they would have to trust him. The leaders looked at all that muscle, and that smile, and the strange animal skin stretched all over his body. The tribe tailor, Swa-St.Nerf, asked Add about his uniform, and learned that it was a complete kangaroo skin, and that THAT was called a “pouch,” where Add kept all his goodies. It was during the third Daily Chicken Race that the fatal accident occurred. The race began and Add started jumping up and down, while the tribe watched that pouch—slack-jawed. Then it happened! The pouch ripped open and about a basket and a half of smooth stones fell at Add’s feet, up to his knees. What they had all wanted to see, looked like a “cocoon among the kumquats.” I am sure somewhere that mound of stones still stands, with Add’s bones in that torn kangaroo suit “down-under.” The tribe soon disbanded and the only spin-off groups that survived were those that realized how little truth there was in all Add-Vert-Eyes meant.

Well, those days are long gone, but it was fun trying to recount them for you. Of course, underwear by more recent “ancient” standards, say 1964, were considered as basic articles of clothing

that were worn over bare flesh under your outer clothes. Most of us kids grew up in brands called Jockey (as the twig is bent, etc.), Fruit-of-the-Loom (what’s in a name!), or Hanes. A few more spirited guys enjoyed the freedom of putting their best half-foot forward in a Munsingwear pouch, or topping their taper in a colored Milcas T-shirt. Present-day designs are sculptured to where they look like someone is still in them when they are hanging on the line. They are of such fabric, and size, they can be tucked into your fist or pocket or double as a swimsuit.

Below

A preview look at November’s “Down on the Farm” layout. The location is the Town Squire Ranch, north of San Francisco. These German imported briefs are a combo of poly and wool and from Town Squire on the Polk(strasse) in San Fran. Our farm “crew” is Larry Schenfeld, who likes and looks great in leather, and is an account exec in S.F.; Jack Dodson, professional model; and Ken Leetzow, 1974 Mr. Gay California—as well as Mr. Karnival—a 6’3” pussy-cat.



special report - theatre

LYING IN STATE in Washington HOSANNA in Toronto

by E. Donnell Stoneman

The Eisenhower Theatre is part of the prestigious John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Located in the middle of the nation's capital, it seems a less than likely place to premiere a new drama dealing exclusively with the subject of Gays. Yet that is exactly what happened last April when the annual American College Theatre Festival was held in Washington with a new addition to the schedule of events: a contest to find the best original script written and produced on a college campus.

Lying in State, a gay comedy by Lane Bateman, a 32-year-old graduate student at Southern Illinois University, was selected as first runner-up in the nationwide contest and, even though only the first-place winner was original-

ly scheduled for presentation, the judges were so impressed with the play that they included it in the festival.

Bateman's three-act script takes place on a Los Angeles campus where two young Gays have made a pact with a couple of lesbian friends to pose as two married couples in order to take advantage of the administration's low-rent policy for families. The first act is a kind of dizzy Feydeauish farce where mistaken identities collide with sexual horseplay. The dialogue is always fresh, witty, outspoken and deftly tuned to match the character's specific personality and situation.

The older Gay is Eric and he's entrenched in the established sex patterns of monogamy. Paul, his lover, is younger, true in his fashion, which does not exclude the possibility of an additional sex partner. Trouble on the way is predicted by their near argument over Paul's insistence on continuing to see Alan, a former lover.

The second act is set for laughs when the mother of one of the girls arrives unexpectedly accompanied by a middle-aged Texan square. They've come to check on the girl's advanced stage of pregnancy, a lie she desperately concocted over the phone earlier to explain her unwillingness to go home for a visit. It's the kind of mixed-up madness, with sudden flashes of impromptu falsifying, that student actors energetically play to the hilt. But these managed to maintain the underlying current of darker concern over the need for lies and the smashing of icons. When Alan's arrival interrupts the proceedings, the three couples become even more entangled in their web of deceit, and the second act curtain falls on riotous confusion.

After deliberately setting out to put the audience in a receptive mood with two acts of hilarity, Bateman turns his guns in the third on his prime target. Behind him is the clear message of honesty preferred, demonstrated by the daughter's defiant announcement of her love for the girl next door. The triangular love pattern traced by Eric and Paul and Alan is now sharply defined. In the final moments of the play, Alan sets about to systematically seduce Eric and he almost succeeds. At least he comes close enough to cause Eric a twinge of unaccustomed uneasiness about his earlier protestations of eternal fidelity.



Top Left: Paul (J. Alfred Rodriguez) is a late riser and his lover, Eric (Paul Klapper) is afraid the next-door neighbor might pop in and discover his 'wife' is a male in Lane Bateman's *Lying in State*. Above Left: While the boys and girls are away, Chlo's mother (Kathryn Hollis) and her Texas boyfriend (Malcolm Rothman) arrive unexpectedly and indulge in a bit of Western style horseplay. Their fun is interrupted by the sudden appearance of Alan, Paul's ex-lover (John Wedd). Above Right: Chlo announces her love for Rae (Cynthia Schramm) and, to her mother's dismay, seals it with a kiss.

Later, when Paul returns to say good-bye, for he cannot agree to his lover's demands for a monogamous relationship, Eric tells him he has rejected Alan's offer of sex. To his surprise, Paul berates him for not accepting the invitation. The play ends as Eric, apparently convinced of the merits of polygamy, leaves to join the two men.

Bateman had a specific reason for writing his first gay play and he wastes no time in explaining it.

"I get very angry and perturbed about things like *Boys in the Band* and *That Certain Summer*," he says. "It's nice that people are at least seeing homosexuals but I'm very impatient with the idea that you've got to be miserable or die at the end. I'm homosexual and I get goddamn sick and tired of reading plays that are lies. So I said, okay, I'll write one. My play is concerned with what happens if you surround your life with lies. Not only about being gay, but all kinds of lies."

Bateman speaks, and writes, from personal experience. In the fall of 1972 he was an instructor of drama at Augustana College, a small church-affiliated school in Rock Island, Illinois. He fell in love with one of his students, the feeling was reciprocated and the two shared a home for over a year. Then, suddenly, an explosion shattered their life, triggered by what Bateman calls "the oldest story in the world." While visiting his parents, his lover, Peter Pehrson, had left a letter from Bateman open and his



mother read it.

The outcome was an hysterical phone call to the dean of Augustana who immediately called for Bateman's resignation. Bateman refused. The case created a furor among the students who approved wholeheartedly of Bateman as a teacher and protested loudly the invasion of his private life. A kind of compromise was eventually reached when he agreed to leave before his contract expired with the condition that Augustana would continue to pay his salary.

When Bateman left, Peter went with him. But before they left, they decided on a course of out-and-out honesty. Peter wrote a coolly unemotional letter

to his parents stating his determination to continue his relationship with his lover, and sent a copy to the dean. On the week *Lying in State* played Washington, Peter was busy working behind the scenes. Later that evening, he and Lane quietly celebrated their second anniversary together.

At the evening performance I attended at the Eisenhower Theatre, my next seat neighbor was the official representative of the Amoco Oil Company, one of the two sponsoring corporations of the event. (Eastern Airlines was the other.) Mr. Amoco was accompanied by his wife and teenage niece and, as it turned out, they were in for something of a sur-



Top Right: While a party is going on next door, Alan slips back in to attempt sex with Eric and nearly succeeds. Above: Eric feels guilty about the near-seduction but Paul is merely sorry that he didn't go through with it. Right: All ends happily with Paul and Eric agreeing that their life will not be lived according to hetero standards. All photos of *Lying in State* by Richard Braaten.



prise when the curtain rose on the first act of *Lying in State* to reveal two nude young men lying in the same bed.

When the house lights came up at the first intermission, Mrs. Amoco leaned across her niece and asked with a heavy, disapproving scowl if I knew who made the choice of plays. I explained that outstanding teachers, critics and professional theatre people were sent to the different regions to view and then select the best productions to represent each area. Sensing her reaction to Bateman's play, I stressed the fact that no less a personage than Richard L. Coe, the eminent critic of the *Washington Post*, had been so impressed by the entry from SIU that, although it failed to win first place, he nevertheless insisted that such a significant production be brought to the Kennedy Center and included on the program.

My explanation failed to impress Mrs. Amoco. Her lips pursed tight with distaste; she settled back in her seat.

I directed a question across the laps of the two ladies toward Mr. Amoco. What, I wondered, did he think of the play? His answer was a gruff, "Well, I'm certainly not proud of *this* one!" I asked him why, but his lips were also tightly closed. I persisted. Was it, I wanted to know, the subject or the treatment that he objected to? His only comment was a cryptic, "There's no reason to be so crude!"

At that, Mrs. Amoco's lips became unsealed. She launched into a heated diatribe about the "negative aspects" of the play. "I suppose my husband and I are square," she said again and again. "We haven't even seen *The Exorcist* and we may never see it!" With an imperious wave of her hand she brushed away the rest of the audience. "You heard them," she said accusingly. "They like it! But if I had known it was going to be like this, I certainly would not have brought my niece to see it!"

The three Amocos sat in stony silence for the duration of the second act, expressionless as statues except for the moment onstage when one of the young men tenderly kissed his lover. At that, Mrs. Amoco clapped her hand to her mouth with a shocked, audible gasp and sat, rigid with disapproval, until the lights came up on the second act intermission. Then, as if on cue, the three rose and marched stiff-faced up the aisle

and out of the theatre, their eyes fixed straight ahead as if fearing a glance backwards would turn them to salt.

The Amocos, and a few others, were in a minority. When the curtain fell on the final scene of *Lying in State*, approximately half the house rose to their feet in a spontaneous burst of applause.

I chatted at length with Paul Klapper who played Eric and John Webb who played Alan and was surprised to discover that both were straight—that, in fact, their exposure to gay life actually began when they were cast in the play. But, despite their lack of personal experience, the prospect of portraying a Gay presented no problems at all. As Klapper put it, "Except for the guy's sexual-love object, he's no different than any other guy."



Cuirette, the leatherclad stud (Richard Donat), forces his transvestite lover, Hosanna (Richard Monette), to face reality in a scene from the Toronto production of *Hosanna* by Michel Tremblay.

One thing did bother both young actors, though, and that was the touch of nudity. But the manner in which director Phyllis Wagner staged the scenes, stressing the effect of nudity without resorting to front-faced penis swinging, quickly dispelled their uneasiness.

The young playwright is preparing his second play on a gay theme, *Kiss the Sky*, and as part of his thesis for his degree, is completing a script for a feature film dealing with a daring robbery committed by two charming crooks who just happen to also be gay.

It's still too early to say what professional productions lie ahead for *Lying in State*. But after such a dynamic tryout in Washington, there's no question but

that it's bound to pop up again, perhaps in New York or Los Angeles, or any place in between.

In Toronto, the 180-seat Tarragon Theatre, home of the new hit, *Hosanna*, is located in a quiet, semi-residential section of the city, about a twenty-minute ride due north from downtown. It's an unimposing, one-story brick building facing a vacant lot slit neatly in the middle by a railroad track running parallel to the street, the kind of setting that might suggest a home base for a small-town little theatre group where bored housewives come to slip lazily through an amateur production of *Plaza Suite*. Hardly conducive, you might say, to experimental drama.

Yet that is ultimately what *Hosanna* is triumphantly, gloriously all about! An experiment in theatre that doggedly defies description, stubbornly resists categorization, explodes myths and preconceptions, and succeeds in riveting attention on what is perhaps our most basic human need: to evade self-delusion, to see ourselves as we really are and recognize the result as being worthy of love.

The two characters in Michel Tremblay's script are Hosanna, a transvestite, and her lover in leather motorcycle gear, Cuirette. The setting is Hosanna's apartment. The time is immediately after a disastrous Halloween drag party. Hosanna enters first, still dressed in fantastic array as Elizabeth Taylor in *Cleopatra*, reluctant to drop the disguise, painfully—and savoring the pain—reliving the events that preceded the opening of the play.

Cuirette enters and the play's principal theme is stated. Like a piece of music it is developed and recapitulated, following a prescribed form, a series of arias and duets as natural as breathing, carrying the viewer caught in its shimmering spell irresistibly along on an inevitable course.

The two circle each other in conversation, each full of recriminations and accusations, eager to wound, yet wary of causing unbearable pain. In a fascinating series of scenes that flow in and out like cinematic images, the full depth and dimension of the two characters emerge. With uncanny precision, Hosanna skirts the brink of waspish caricature, wit and bite ever present, but the audience's laughter carefully anticipated and

controlled.

Resenting his lover's accusation of betrayal, Cuirette at first refuses to assist her in undressing but finally relents and unsnaps the regal ankle-length gown. Now, clad only in a brief bra, panties and stockings, Hosanna resumes her assault on Cuirette. Incensed even further by a telephone call from the hostess of the drag ball who teasingly coaxes Cuirette to return to the party, she precipitates a climactic scene that culminates with Cuirette storming out of the house.

When the audience returns for the second half of the play, they find Hosanna lying propped up in bed, glaring at them with scornful eyes. The action resumes with an outrageously daring device as she grabs a chair, places it centerstage, straddles it and launches into a long, fearless monologue delivered straight at the audience. It is a hard-hitting, heart-pounding moment of true theatre, dramatic and audacious as hell and it works!

Just as Hosanna reaches the point of her story of what really happened at the drag ball, Cuirette returns and, standing close behind her, his hands caressing her shoulders, begins a soft, affectionate counterpoint to her long litany of humiliation.

Finally, near dawn the lovers prepare for bed and the drama moves inexorably towards its unforgettable close. Cuirette softly asks Hosanna to remove the last vestige of the terrible night. She slips out of bed, silently moves to the mirrored dressing table, sits for a moment contemplating the sad semblance of Cleopatra, and then, a few quick slashes of cleansing cream and a final abrupt movement, and the makeup and wig are gone.

With that symbolic gesture, Hosanna becomes the real Claude Lemieux. He rises, quickly drops the remaining briefs, and stands naked, waiting for Cuirette who has already shed the leather gear and now, also naked, moves to meet him as Raymond Boldue. On their final tender embrace of nakedness the lights slowly dim.

For a single extended beat there is absolute silence. A feeling of collective breaths held for a long, suspenseful moment. Then, as the first flicker of the house lights appears, a sudden, tumult-

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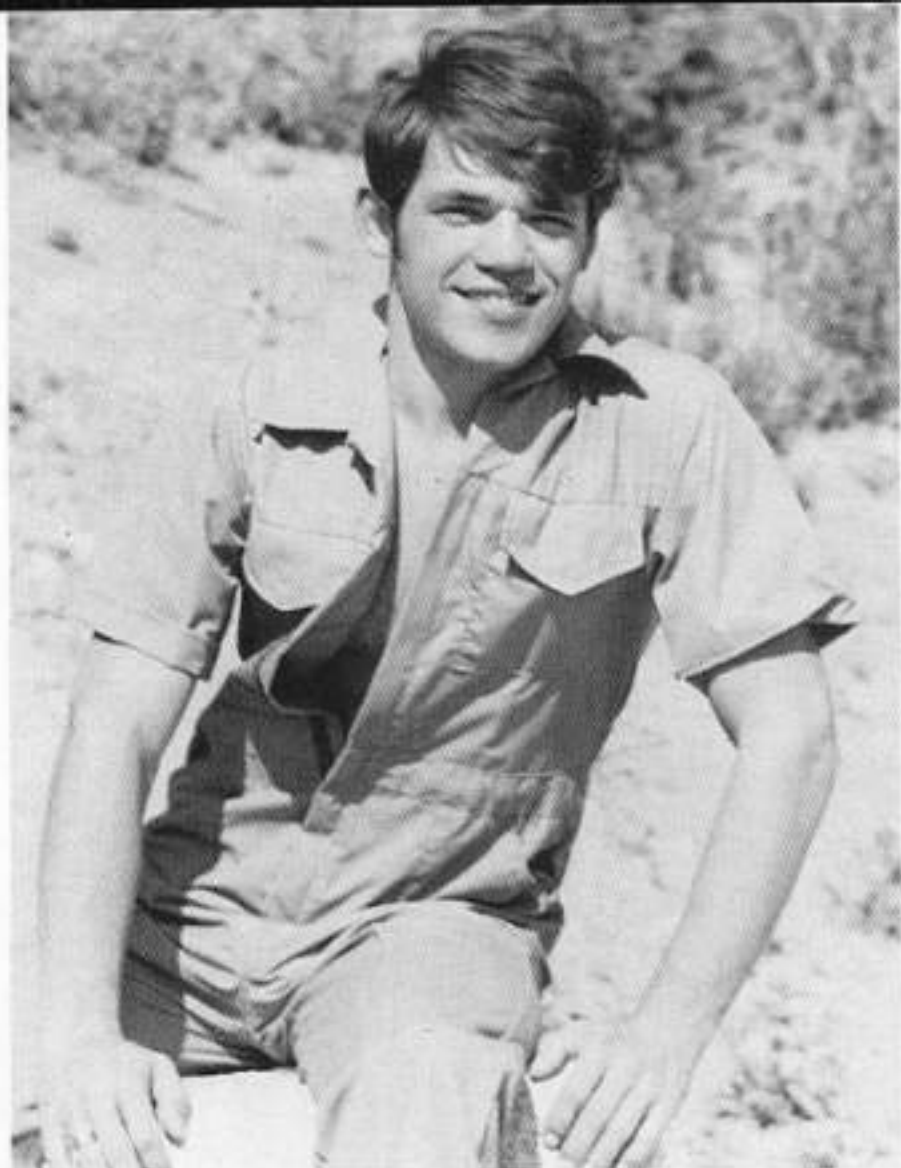


In a quiet moment before Hosanna goes back to being plain old Claude Lemieux and Cuirette ends his make-believe role and becomes his real self, Richard Boldue (photo by Robert Barnette).

DENNIS COATS ALL THIS... AND FUNNY TOO

by Hugh Harrison

photography by C.C. Hill



discovery



Discoveries are, well, where you discover them, of course . . . but imagine finding one right here in the pages of IN TOUCH! We'd received the ad copy for Brawn of California and there, looking out at us, we found him, Dennis Coats. A quick call to their advertising representatives put us in contact with Dennis, who proved to be altogether likable, affable, totally outgoing . . . and absolutely hilarious!

Dennis couldn't quite believe us at first.

"You're puttin' me on. Who is this, really?"

We finally convinced him that we were really us and that we, us, really wanted him. Over the phone he sounded as if he was sure we'd made some horrible mistake. We confirmed that he was the nice-looking young guy in the Brawn ad. He readily assured us that part was very true. That was him all right, right there in the form-fitting, net-front bathing suit. We quickly arranged a meeting, especially after seeing the entire Brawn catalogue featuring many more photos of Dennis. We definitely assured him that it was indeed he we were interested in and wanted to do a discovery article on him.

That first day Dennis didn't so much walk into the office, as he . . . well, at first he stuck his head in the door to make sure he had the right place. Then he bound right in, gee-whizzing it all over the place. He bounced around like a cork in some runaway bottle of champagne. I must admit I was somewhat startled by Dennis' size. He photographs . . . well, short. As it turned out it was his solid, firm build that gave the illusion. From the pictures in the catalogue I was expecting someone of, oh, average height . . . let's say five feet six to five feet eight at the most, with a nice solid body. Now, in bounds this hunky, handsome 175-pound six-footer with a terrific body and the disposition of a warm cocker spaniel puppy.

Dennis took a good look around the place. He still isn't quite sure that it's he you want. You assure him. You're sure. He suddenly blasts you with a bright-fun quizzical look. He runs a tongue in his cheek and twists his face around his mouth in a happy hello expression. When asked about his modeling work for Brawn, you're re-greeted with his I-couldn't-really-believe-it's-me-they-wanted expression.

"I really don't know how it all happened. This guy just walked up to me in the gym where I work out and asked me if I'd like to do some modeling work for a men's fashion catalogue. At first I just couldn't believe him . . . didn't believe him. Then, I decided to go along with the gag, so I told him, 'Sure, why not!' Ya know . . . the next thing I know I'm really doin' it! It was a blast! I really enjoyed it. And . . . I even got paid for havin' all that fun. It was a good time."

He quickly added that this modeling job was his one and only big splash into the world of show biz. He just as quickly

assures me that, while it was great fun, it just isn't something he could get his head into. Somehow it all seems to Dennis a little removed from the very real, the very necessary. Reality for him is some firm contact with real people. It's people, on a real and practical level, that he's interested in, can get involved with now.

"It is people that I really like. You know what I mean? I could never be a monk, in other words."

There's a certain solidity about Dennis, beyond his physique. I'll admit that it is draped with his invisible cloak of humor. Still, it's a solidity that's evident in both his build and his background, too. His simple, right-on, person-to-person practicality is very true to his Cancerian nature, a practicality nurtured by his upbringing.

Dennis Coats was born and raised in a small town in Oregon, Roseburg. He describes it as being close to Eugene. Then, with a funny little half-sigh says it's really terrible when you have to describe the town you're brought up in as being close to a larger town that no one's ever heard of either. He gear shifts that little half-sigh into a full chuckle as he admits that he'd have to describe his growing up pretty much the same way, a little boy close to a town in Oregon that no one's ever heard of. His sighed resignation brings vividly home all the disadvantages, both real and imagined, of having to grow up in a very small town.

"Our town was sooo small the most exciting thing to do was ... but, I'll bet you've heard all those jokes before ... many times."

I have and I understand.

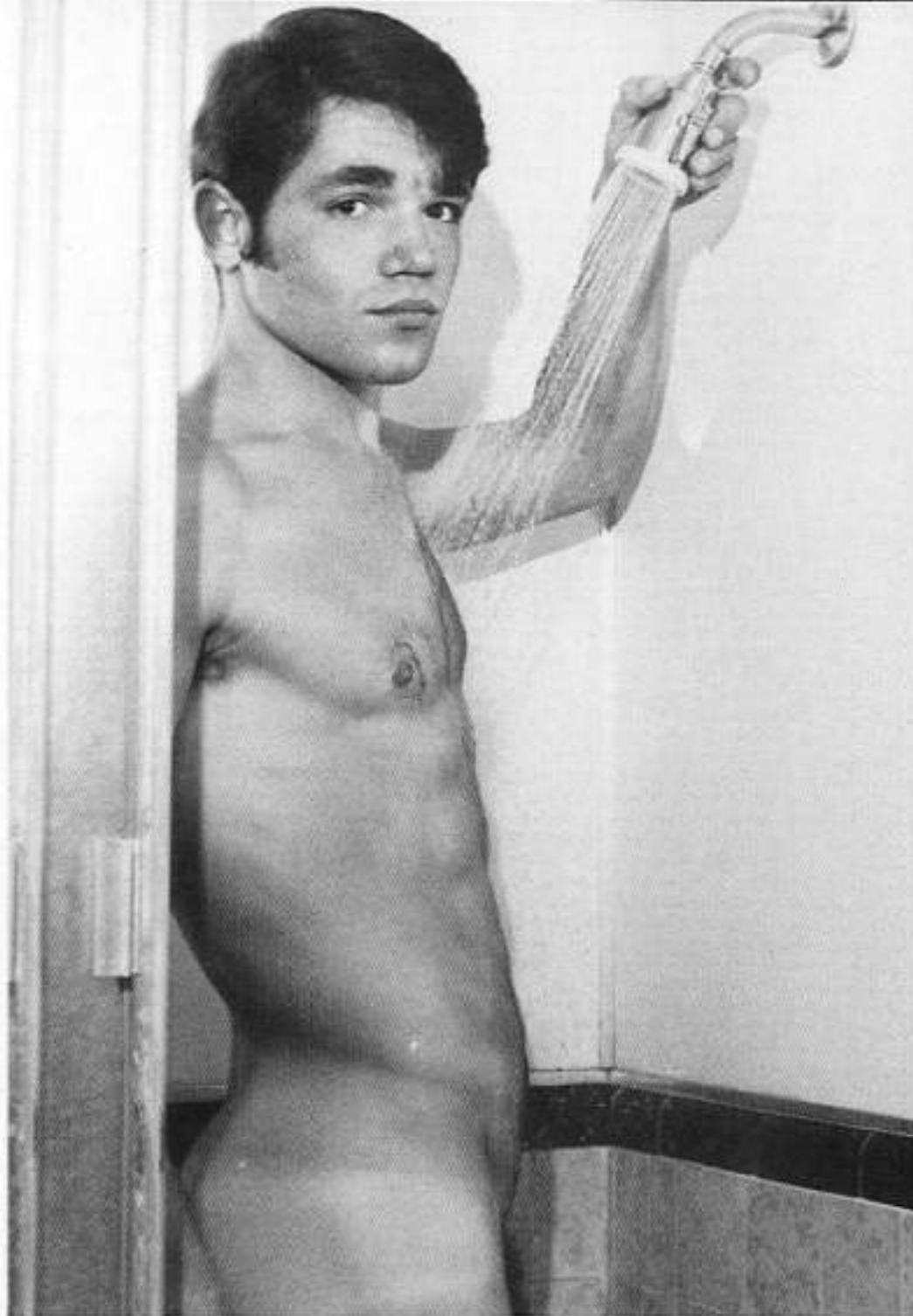
I also understand all the advantages of growing up in such a place, too. It instills in anyone fortunate enough to have been born and raised in the easy, unhurried atmosphere of this almost now extinct, very American pleasure, a simple sense of contact. It refines itself glowingly in Dennis. He approaches everything with this inherent, happy, trusting, disarming simplicity. He meets all his problems directly, head-on, disposing of the easier ones and acting quickly on the more difficult, more involved ones that require a little more time to solve.

"Look, I never run away from trouble ... exactly. I just avoid it. And ... I never, ever go looking for it."

One thing that's very important to Dennis, no matter how bad the trouble, how hard it is to get out of, he simply will not fight. He can think of nothing he considers worth fighting over. This non-violent approach is something he was brought up with and may even have been born with, he feels. Nothing's worth bloodshed, certainly never, never death. It spills over, surely from his parents. One of the things he missed small-towning it was guns, something almost every other semi-small-town boy is heir to. Not so with Dennis. Understand, he doesn't go out and rant and rave against them. That's not his way. He simply side-steps the whole question. Guns offend him. It's just that easy! This no-violence approach to growing up explains the other inherent small-boy activity—small town or not—that he avoided totally: fighting. He did this totally by his own doing. It is some doing, too, in a house with siblings ... but, even now Dennis is determined. No fighting!

"I just never, ever fought when I was a boy ... even with my brother. I just wouldn't, that's all. I guess you could say I resisted all that and I'm still resisting it. I resist by doing nothing at all. I resist by desisting."

All the other parts, the rest of his younger years are remem-





bered with a truly warm fondness. His dad drives a truck for a lumber company and his mom is just a housewife.

"I wonder why people say 'just'? My God, you should have seen her . . . so much work! Hard work . . . especially with three kids to take care of."

These three kids include his siblings, a sister and brother. When I asked if he was the youngest—something I'd sort of suspected—a twinkle lit up in Dennis' eyes, a charming secret smile crossed quickly over his face and he admitted absolutely nothing! That was the only thing, however, about his growing up in Oregon he wouldn't talk about.

"Okay, now . . . let's see. How I spent my childhood: well. . . ."

His favorite word for it is "ordinary." He dearly loves both his father and his mother. He stays in close contact with them and they with him. He's also very close to his brother and sister. When the family gets together it is indeed a fun, happy, loving

time.

"I also spend lots and lots of money on phone calls!"

In his early teens Dennis found a quick natural bent toward athletics. After the small-town required stint in the Boy Scouts, his person-to-person personality easily sought out a natural vent for both the athletic ability and the innerpersonal relationships he finds so necessary. He quickly found the best possible answer. He became a counselor at a nearby day camp for underprivileged boys. He taught swimming. He loved it! He had become very proficient in swimming in school; he holds several medals in that sport as well as in diving. He feels truly at home in the water. All those muscles developed by swimming and diving led him down the natural path to gymnastics later on in high school. He soon added this to his camp-counselor curriculum, as well as taking on the teaching of classes in swimming and life-saving at the local YMCA. These were all good times for Dennis. He recalls them with fun-tumbled memories.

The one thing he wouldn't do back home was to follow in his father's footsteps. He never worked with his father like most kids did growing up, like his brother had done. Working for a huge lumber company? Dennis just shakes his head. He reaffirms and restates his position. It must be people he relates to! Anyway, he just doesn't understand trees. Oh, he likes plants all right, but they will never take the place of people. I suggested that maybe it was just another part of his non-violent nature, not wanting to cut the trees down, not wanting to kill them. This caused about five minutes of solid laughter from Dennis. I actually got embarrassed—and I don't embarrass easily. I finally told him that he was a great audience but that it just wasn't that funny. All the laughter suddenly stopped cold. He looked straight at me with a careful, steady gaze and pronounced solemnly, "You're right . . . it wasn't."

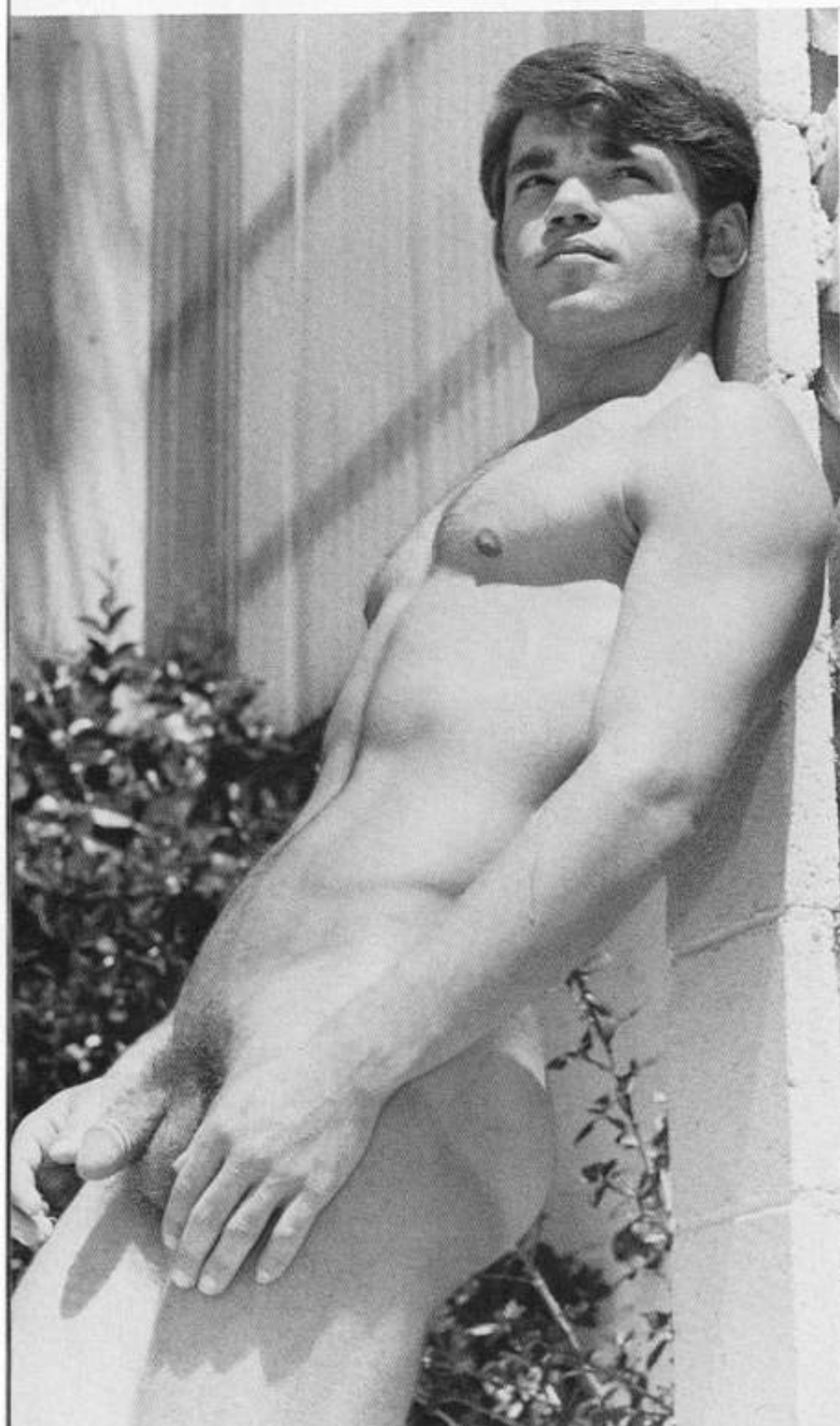
Now THAT'S funny!

In spite of the family closeness, or maybe even because of it, and with his parents' careful urging, that of a practical, knowing family, Dennis knew that at eighteen it was time for him to strike out on his own. His face became suddenly serious. It was the first time during all our conversation that this note had crept into his voice or his being. He even looked away as he talked to me instead of looking me right in the eye as he'd been doing. He quietly confided that there's nothing more depressing or repressing for a young person than growing up in some small town and then being trapped there and growing old, faced with an overabundance of lack of opportunity. This too is another Cancerian trait. These sudden flashes of dark, somber moods that seem to surface from nowhere adding complexity to a personality you think you have figured out. On the other hand, though, a little complexity in such a charming, happy person can only add a dash of interest. Then, just as suddenly, a small, quick smile dissipates this brief, sad touch of an earlier, fortunately self-missed, reality.

"Sorry about the . . . I do let my head return to the past too much sometimes . . . but you do know Cancers do like to hold on to things for a long, long time."

Look, it's perfectly all right with me if Dennis Coats chooses to hold on to some old ideas, because, in so doing, he's bound to hold onto some old ideals as well. That for Dennis works very neatly.

So, now our boy finds himself in Southern California. He's been on his own for all of two years . . . and loves it! He chose



Southern California for the same exact reason, he supposes, that everyone else does—the climate. He did try Los Angeles for a little while but those Oregon-mountain-air-accustomed lungs of his just couldn't take our smog. San Francisco didn't make it for him either.

"San Francisco . . . oh, no! It's just too cold there. That sure is one thing I don't miss about home . . . the cold . . . and all that snow!"

It remained for San Diego to become the practical choice . . . and it's even close to the ocean that he loves. He's even becoming accustomed to their few smog-filled, eye-smarting days—although it doesn't compare to Los Angeles, he assures me. He's just begun to dabble in a career in medicine, although he's not at all sure what he wants to spend his life doing yet. Right now his far-from-concrete plans include going to school to become an RN (a registered nurse).

"Well, look . . . it only takes four years and it's really good money. Actually, I'm much more interested because they need me, really need me, the profession and all the patients. I like that feeling, you know . . . being needed. It's a good feeling. And I can help so many people."

Upon arriving and getting settled in an apartment—his first own apartment!—one thing he did was to go right out and join a health club, the one the man from Brawn discovered him in, working out.

"I had to. I really missed working out at the YMCA with the kids. Now, I'm back on my schedule, I go every day. Hey . . . you know what? I gotta confess . . . actually, my family tends to be . . . uhh . . . heavy. Ya know? See, I was getting . . . fat, you understand? No, not really fat-fat but just . . . too much weight. Hey, that's what fat is, isn't it? Oh, well. . ."

Over dinner after our fun and funny day of discovery—me of Dennis and Dennis of absolutely everything—I discovered something else, his extraordinary ability to attract attention. Now, he really doesn't try for it or even work at it. It just happens . . . really just happens! He, well, does sort of take advantage of it, though, but all in some quiet, charming, funny way. He really does have this incredible nutty charm. He does things . . . well, no one else could ever get away with them! He comes up with the most unexpected things at the least expected times . . . and gets away with them all! Just ask him about his little trick with the fork! No . . . no, on second thought DON'T ask him about the fork trick!

As we were finishing our dinner, I asked Dennis if he had any final thoughts. He came up with a couple. He got a bit wistful and told me he was sorry he'd missed 'cutting loose' but he promised to more than make up for it now! A mischievous smile crept across that face and right then I decided not to pursue that! Finally then, when he was getting in the car to go to the airport, on his way back to San Diego, he stuck his head out the window. He was obviously again retracing all the recently rerun past.

"Hey . . . you know what? If I had it all to do over again . . . I would!"

A few days later we received one of those funny, apt cards at the office. It was from Dennis and was one he alone could have found and sent. Again, in some funny, still almost disbelieving way he seemed to be asking the same question.

"Hey . . . are you guys *sure* it's me you want?"

Believe me, Dennis. We're sure. We're *very* sure!



IN TOUCH with films

Right: Timothy Bottoms is one of three whalers marooned in the Canadian Arctic confronting an exotic civilization in Paramount's *The White Dawn*. Below Left: In the climactic picnic scene from Warner Brothers' *Uptown Saturday Night*, Sidney Poitier (left) and Bill Cosby (right) are more than a little disconcerted by Harry Belafonte (center in drag). Below Center: Dan Mason (Joe Don Baker) confers with his old friend Finzie (Ann Sothern) in *Golden Needles* from American International. Below Right: Charles Bronson tests his shooting skill for Stuart Margolin (right) in *Death Wish* from Paramount.



White Dawn is both a classic bit of Hollywood romanticism and a sensitive document of Eskimo life.

In 1922 Robert Flaherty filmed his *Nanook of the North* on the east coast of Hudson Bay in the Arctic.

The world has had to wait 50 years to look once more into the soul of those who inhabit that bit of fragile geography that stretches its life thinly over a vast desert of ice. And that is what *White Dawn* successfully pins down in the pages of film history. More intent upon story and entertainment, its quality comes from a steady, unswerving exposition as educational as any document can be. Although in no way controversial, *White Dawn* stirs in the heart of its audience a growing excitement of discovery and a glowing joy of sharing in the fruits of an historical and monumental accomplishment.

Much of this credit is due to the script and its writers, who obviously have worked closely with the director. Nowhere along the struggle of film production was the sensitivity to the delicate culture that reflects that fragile layer of life forgotten, nowhere has anyone faltered, from production design, acting, or continuity. There obviously were compromises. And yet, they must have all been made so entertaining that they become entertainment and storytelling at its most romantic and least sentimental. Some people in the audience may have winced at the obvious momentary comparisons of the highly

sophisticated cultural mores of the Eskimos to the crude manners of the whalers but they are dealt out with a simple honesty that falls pure and cold upon the conscience.

The film has many attractions and is sure to be a slow and enduring winner. Timothy Bottoms (Daggett) may be the main attraction for many moviegoers and the fine performance that will be reported by Lou Gossett will draw in many curious spectators, but Warren Oates, in a thankless ugly-American role, has proven his magical blend of talent and charisma can be as powerful as the best of Clark Gable. He is a man and he is sensitive to other men. He is needed and he is appreciated.

Actor/director Sidney Poitier has bunched together the talents of Bill Cosby, Flip Wilson, Richard Pryor, Harry Belafonte and many more into a lightweight but thoroughly enjoyable capsule called *Uptown Saturday Night*. The yarn involves two squares (Poitier and Cosby) who sneak out on their wives and crash an underworld afterhours joint. While Cosby is in the process of trying to show to Poitier how worldly he is, the place is held up by masked gunmen. The two lose their money and their wallets. The next day Poitier discovers in the newspaper that he has won a \$500,000 lottery. But then he remembers that the lottery ticket is in his wallet, and so the caper begins. Poitier and Cosby search deeper and deeper into the

ghetto underworld trying to ferret out the robbers who now have the wallet, and, in so doing, embroil themselves in a gang war.

Everyone in *Uptown Saturday Night* is a caricature, but you feel like you are being included in some inside jokes. The picture gives you a glimpse of a lot of different sides of ghetto life, from church to speakeasy.

Poitier's directorial techniques are polished insofar as pacing, selection of camera angles, etc., are concerned. This picture doesn't have the self-conscious, showy camera angles which often mar the movies of actor-turned-directors. If you want to have a good time, go see this picture.

Joe Don Baker, looking more like someone waking up out of a drunken dream than a man enmeshed in murderous smuggling, ambles through *Golden Needles* at a pace entirely inconsistent with everything else about this Hollywood-Hong Kong, kung-fu, acupuncture exploitation adventure. Elizabeth Ashley is both lovely and talented and here does a lot with a role that is no more than a caricature for a dumb Girl Friday to a wealthy and evil man, portrayed marvelously by Burgess Meredith. Ann Sothern, as an old, slovenly mahjong parlor proprietress is also marvelous. As Finzie, she is responsible for giving the exposition to what little character retired soldier of fortune, Dan Mason (Joe Don Baker), is supposed to have. Her

performance begs answers to questions of mystique about this man who would come out of retirement only as a favor to his close friend and partner Kwan (Tony Lee). But nothing really is revealed. Mr. Baker smiles at Finzie like—gee, you're a good pal—and then ambles out of her establishment into the great world of high adventure.

Perhaps Mr. Baker found it difficult to get excited about a story that is little more than an idea, albeit a phantasmagoric one. In fact, with the introduction of his stateside partner played by Jim Kelly, the movie gets to look like it is being written as production bounds along. The idea of an ancient golden statue upon which are marked spots for golden needles as acupuncture points that assure either supreme sexual pleasure and youthfulness or sudden and certain death depending on a few minor technicalities is certainly an exploitable item. It is never developed very far but remains the driving force for chase and counterchase between the good bad-guys, the bad bad-guys (both of whom seem somehow to be working for the same evil rich guy) and the Hong Kong kung-fu lady policeman and her entourage.

* * * *

Death Wish is a film directed by Michael Winner, starring Charles Bronson with Vincent Gardenia, William Redfield and Hope Lange. Gardenia is good in what was probably not a difficult role. Bronson is okay, except when he waivers on some particularly bad lines. The exposition of the story is so contrived that you squirm in your seat. Bronson and his wife are first seen on an idyllic tropical beach, then the moment he returns to his office in New York City, the conversation by some coincidence immediately turns to the large number of crimes of the past few weeks. It is an understatement that the situation is telegraphed to the audience with no subtlety whatsoever. It is no surprise that Bronson's wife gets done in by a pack of thugs, and that Bronson is thus converted from his previous pacifism (also established in that conversation in the office), and embarks on a career of shooting street muggers.

The newspaper ads for **Death Wish** quote a number of rave reviews from New York film critics. It seems to me that the acclaim **Death Wish** is receiving

is due more to its subject matter and the timing of its release than to any particular merit of its film craftsmanship. With the rampant increase of street crime and violence in New York City over the past six years or so, it is understandable that New Yorkers (even more so than others) can vicariously relish watching hoods being gunned down by a vengeful, self-appointed, lone vigilante.

One definition of "vigilantism" in Webster's is, "The summary action resorted to by vigilantes when law fails." Since the failure of law seems to be on the upswing (from city streets to Watergate), vigilantism will become increasingly inviting to more and more people. These people will include both private citizens as well as law-enforcement officers who feel constrained by the sluggishness of the court system. So the subject matter of **Death Wish** is definitely current and of import. It's unfortunate that **Death Wish** in no way explores the ramifications of vigilantism with any degree of depth. What would happen in a city the size of New York should vigilantism catch on in popularity (the way skyjacking did) is alluded to in only one throwaway line by Vincent Gardenia.

I do not deny that the picture generates audience enthusiasm. Every time another hood gets plugged, people here and there in the audience cheer and applaud. It seemed there were two kinds of applause. The first kind came from people who like seeing a hero plug anyone, be he badman or cop, Nip or Commie. This kind of applause is more a response to the storytelling craftsmanship of the filmmaker (and it need not be particularly talented craftsmanship) than it is a measure of any social climate or trend. But there was also a different kind of applause in that audience of **Death Wish**. It seemed much more impassioned and reeking of pent-up vengefulness. I think that to fan that kind of emotionalism in these times is going to do more harm than good, but I also think the makers of **Death Wish** either are of the opposite opinion or callously don't care, intending only to cash in on a hot subject.

A friend of mine who came to see the picture with me was one of those persons cheering. What is weird about this is that in his teens he used to be a Central Park mugger himself! Even though his mugging days have long been

a thing of the past, it seemed to me that to him muggers cannot be the faceless unknown objects to be feared that they are to many people. It interested me to know what he thought of the picture. His response was lukewarm, other than that he felt the vigilante was "right-on" for shooting down the thugs. He then added that otherwise the picture "wasn't all that hot." I asked him if he felt it would be right, and if he would like to have a gun himself and go around killing whatever bad guys he came upon in the midst of a crime. After a hesitation his only answer was that he himself is not a killer so it wasn't something that he would do, but he gave no opinion about whether it would be right or wrong for others to do it. He didn't consider that he himself was an example that not all muggers are killers, nor are they all destined to be criminals for the rest of their lives. Yet the hero of **Death Wish** was summarily executing muggers at random (after baiting them by flashing money) as if all muggers are uniformly killers.

It is easy to fall into the trap of liberal ethics and outright condemn vigilantism in all instances. But I think there are times when vigilantism is appropriate as, for that matter, even cannibalism can on occasion be justified.

The biggest problem with real vigilantism (well-intended vigilantism) is the multitude of varying standards that would prompt people to take action. The hero of **Death Wish** confined his killing to street muggers. But if that became acceptable practice in a city the size of New York, how soon before someone else would feel justified in shooting a corporation president out of the belief that the man was responsible for polluting a river or denuding a forest or strip-mining? And then someone would feel justified in bumping off a labor leader out of the belief that he was a threat to the free enterprise system. Homosexual haters would feel justified in targeting gay-lib leaders and vice versa. Sooner or later someone would feel justified in gunning you down if he believed you ran over his dog or cat. The whole thing would snowball. Were vigilantism to become popular and acceptable, not only would you have to be on your lookout for real criminals, but you would also have to be fearful of

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In Touch

with books



I approached Jan Morris' *Conundrum: From James to Jan—An Extraordinary Personal Narrative of Transsexualism* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$5.95, 174 pages) warily, though magazine articles had reported this account to be far superior to its often giddy or pathetic predecessors.

Morris says he first realized he "had been born into the wrong body, and should really be a girl," while sitting at the age of three or four under his mother's piano—she was playing Sibelius. Before undertaking his change almost thirty years later, and during a decade in the hormonal or preoperative stage, James Morris became a renowned journalist, with a masculinely adventure-some flair. A person of rare perception and sensitivity, Morris was at all stages well liked and regarded as healthy. This shines through every paragraph, as it forcefully had in his *Times of London* dispatches from the 1953 ascent of Mt. Everest (he literally ran halfway up and down the mountain daily—for once feeling the joy of a fine masculine body) and in his excellent earlier books, *Pax Britannica*, *Cities* and *The Road to Huddersfield*. His fine character clearly helped society to accept his transition—even in his stodgy London club.

Despite a desire to be unbiased, I've tended to see transsexuals much the way non-Gays regard us: as unfortunates who'd be better off if we gave up our "illusions." The early James-to-Jan reports, contrasting to the joyous yet sensitive masculinity of Morris' previous writings, conditioned me to see his operation as a sad waste.

His elegant account chastened my chauvinism without making me feel I'd taken castor oil. Challenged and amused, I hope to return several times

to this thought-provoking book. Instead of a self-pitying tract on the toils of a gender-confused soul buffeted by a cruel world, Morris offers a profoundly optimistic, deeply human commentary on a surprising range of concerns. The musings on maleness and femaleness are most enlightening. . . .

What a contrast to the dangerously hypocritical bathos of *Joy, A Homosexual's Search for Fulfillment* (Creation House, \$3.95, 144 pages)! It purports to be a series of basically unedited letters between Pat Boone, a squeaky-clean singing relic of the saccharine Sixties, and a distressed young woman whose homosexuality he "cured" by correspondence—with a little help from Jesus. Some will be sure this is flat-out and very corn-ball fiction. Unfortunately, Ms. "Barbara Evans" rings true as a character, prodded by the unctuous Boone from corrosive guilt into a state of mounting hysteria (labeled as conversion). Boone's syrupy-type judgmentalism ladled out so pompously (one would as soon accuse President Nixon of a high level of intelligence) between engagements as "a busy entertainer" (he admits without detail that he too had sampled a lot of sin in his early Hollywood days) and his advertisements for his icky domesticity, have driven many distraught homosexuals to depths of despair. We can only hope that no terrible sequel will follow the sickening and mindless scenario here offered as a panacea for all Gays. It is clear that "Ms. Evans" will not be satisfied until she can publicly pray over every Gay she comes across, whether they like it or not. Otherwise her own conversion has no meaning. *Joy* unwittingly expresses the vicious oppressiveness of Christian goody-

goodyism, and it is with real distress that we observe some MCC Gays taking on this meddlesome Pharisaic unctuousness, condemning all who fail to measure to their yardstick.

Don't miss *Different: An Anthology of Homosexual Short Stories*, edited by Stephen Wright (Bantam Books, \$1.95, 394 pages), a jewel box of delights. Since Cory's *21 Variations on a Theme* two decades ago went quickly out of print, there's been a need for a representative collection of gay fiction, old and new. Seven stories Cory used are reprinted here (de Maupassant's geekish "Paul's Mistress," Lawrence's "Prussian Officer," Wilde's "Priest and the Acolyte," Isherwood's "On Reugen Island," Anderson's "Hands," Kauffman's "Fulvous Yellow" and James' "The Pupil") along with 17 others, four of the best being telling pieces about a hustler's life by Phil Andros, the only writer other than Wilde to be represented by more than a single entry.

Wilma Shore's "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life" is a delightful bit of irony about a mother who tries too hard to raise her son by the textbooks. Joseph Hansen's "Snow Fall" tells with horror about the awful coming-out of an aging professor. James Blake's "Day of the Alligator" presents a harsh glimpse of Deep South prison life . . . but sample them yourself. Like me, you may have nominations for the story which might best have been omitted, but the batting average here is terrific.

Dr. Walter Alvarez, for decades an outspoken defender of Gays, has been badly used in the stupidly bastardized paperback, *Homosexuality vs. Gay Liberation* (labeled a Confrontation Dou-

blebook by Pyramid, \$1.75, 364 pages). Alvarez, an M.D. and a longtime newspaper medical columnist first learned of the problems suffered by homosexuals in 1890 as a boy in Hawaii when his doctor-father told about elderly Englishmen exiled by scandal-fearing families and living in beach shacks. Over the years he read widely in the field, absorbing a lot of sense and some nonsense (far more of the latter was being published), but repeatedly and uncompromisingly defended the rights of Gays in his column at a time when that was not at all popular. He stoutly refuted the Freudian mythology. An avid student but not a researcher, his ideas have kept growing, even at 90-plus years, but it is not surprising that he is less than hip. This collection of his newspaper pieces was apparently assembled about four years ago, later added to when he failed to find a publisher.

But though dated and sometimes sloppy, Dr. Alvarez doesn't deserve the Bergler/Bieber tag which Avon books tacked on, calling in Ms. Sue March, "a lesbian, a feminist and a social worker" to give Gay Liberation's answer to "the medical view" that homosexuality is a disease. Ms. March concedes graciously that Dr. Alvarez is no Bobby Riggs—but neither is she a Billy Jean King, though she might knock them dead on the neighborhood court. She shows no understanding of the distinction between the terms "Gay Liberation" and "Homosexuality," which the book covers advertise, and no appreciation for the evolution of medical attitudes to which Alvarez was a steady contributor. Her patchwork essay consists of a tepid repeat of standard medical theories about sex variants and lengthy cribbings from the paperback *The Gay Crusaders*. The publishers throw in a bonus: the Gay Activists' Alliance pamphlet, *20 Questions About Homosexuality: A Political Primer*, which can be obtained directly from GAA, New York, in more handsome format for a small charge.

I met Clinton R. Jones, Canon of Christ Episcopal Cathedral in Hartford, Connecticut, and author of the youth-oriented book, *What About Homosexuality?* at a recent Dayton, Ohio, conference on the Gay Catholic, and was deeply impressed, and more so now having finished his second book, *Homosexual-*

ity and Counseling, (Fortress Press, \$3.50, 132 pages), a straightforward, easy-to-read paperback on the sorts of situations which a counselor working with Gays might come across. Canon Jones understands why some Gays bristle at any talk of agencies (not run by and for Gays) being set up "to help homosexuals," but he insists that given the bias which exists, many put-down young Gays need just such counseling to restore their self-respect. He does not lay down hard and fast moral rules for counselees, but he does insist that certain types of non-Gays should make no attempt whatever to counsel Gays.

Most of the problems he raises will be familiar to those who have worked or read widely in the field, but it is an excellent primer to give to counselors, ministers, social workers and teachers who only occasionally come across young Gays—or to parents who are confused but not closed-minded.

The victim of Pat Boone's destructive counseling is fictitiously located in Hartford. Pity she didn't get to Canon Jones first. By now he probably couldn't help her.

Roger Casement, *The Biography of a Patriot Who Lived for England, Died for Ireland* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$8.95, 448 pages), by Brian Inglis, is the first of a long line of biographies of a man the British hanged in 1916 and slandered for 40 years after, which does not either assert that Casement was such an idealist that he could not possibly have been homosexual, or that his homosexuality proves him to have been a fool, a scoundrel, a liar and a traitor.

Casement, then a British consular official in West Africa, shocked the world in 1904 with his exposé of slave conditions and genocide in the Congo Free State, which Leopold, King of the Belgians, had made into a vast private preserve. Seven years later he exposed similar conditions in the Putumayo region of the upper Amazon. Then, increasingly convinced that British rule in England was no more beneficial (Irish population had dropped during Victoria's long reign from nine million to less than half that) he became more and more an Irish revolutionary. In the early World War years he came to the U.S. to raise funds for Irish relief, then went to Germany to solicit arms and to recruit

an Irish Brigade among POW's. To the British who had knighted him a few years earlier, this was treason—though they were similarly encouraging Czechs to revolt from Austro-Hungary and Arabs from Turkey.

Disappointed in the lukewarm German response, he rushed back to Ireland to try to abort the planned Easter Rebellion (he felt it was doomed without heavy arms shipments). He was captured, taken incognito to England, tried and condemned to hang. Protests for leniency from the U.S. Senate, from Rome, South America, from leading British intellectuals and, of course, from Ireland, were silenced by the government's surreptitious circulation of pages purporting to be diaries Casement had kept in 1903 and 1910, recording among other things an active homosexual life and a sharp eye for measurements in excess of seven inches.

The defense movement wilted, and except for those who refused to believe the diaries authentic, most historians of both Ireland and the anti-slavery movement simply erased Casement from the record. Those who remained loyal stubbornly denied that so saintly if not always wise a man could possibly have done the monstrous things recorded so lovingly in the diaries. The government even refused to admit that the diaries existed until after their 1959 publication by Grove Press, when they proved to be generally cryptic and not so shocking after all.

Their authenticity is still hotly debated, and I am less convinced than Inglis that forgers would have no reason to go to such lengths, and there are sound reasons to distrust the stories as to how the diaries came into the government's hands.

Readers ask about bibliographies of currently available homosexual and gay liberation books and articles. The best brief bibliographies are available from The American Library Association's Task Force on Gay Liberation, Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103 and from Homosexual Information Center, the peppery reactionaries at 3473½ Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028—for a small contribution. Both are assembled with some bias, so get both for a fairly representative list.

—LYN PEDERSEN



In Touch

with music



The motivation of money aside, recordings of the stage musical can be viewed in several ways: if well produced, taken together they can be an apt chronology of the American musical. Most important of all its functions, I feel, is the ability of these recordings to capture and hold forever the memories and magic of live theatre experience. Plus, records are still the best press agent Broadway has ever had. They can instill in a potential audience a real desire to see a production.

Judging a musical's merits solely via recording is hard at best. What works well onstage may work not at all on vinyl. It all depends on the record producer. He's that man who must transfer to the little round disc all the joy, fun, love, sorrow, pain and razzle-dazzle of living theatre. Very few men are capable of doing it well.

These days a major problem exists for such a producer. Admittedly, the trend to work the songs and dances within the plot has been a giant stride forward for the musical comedy form, but it has created recording problems. The big drawback for the recording industry here is simple, no big hit songs to help pre-sell shows like you had with *Mame* or *Hello, Dolly!* This, in part, may account for the recent failure of recordings of musicals to reach their potential audiences. Alas, it seems to have gone further than just the records. The lack of the hit-song-inspired, must-see show, coupled with high prices, etc., have been joined by another very disheartening, new phenomenon. Broadway seems to have woven some strange invincible cocoon around itself to keep out the outsider, retreating into a self-contained, miniscule, microsome that can't or won't relate to the public at large. This has succeeded in driving

away not just the audiences but young, fresh, creative talent as well. Both the performers and writers are seeking more rewarding fields of musical endeavor. Right now, in order to devote yourself to the Broadway stage you must be fiercely dedicated and/or independently wealthy.

Of the past season's new shows, currently still playing on Broadway, the most successful recording—and the one that most successfully captures the spirit of the musical it's preserving—is Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* (Columbia KS-32265). This is chiefly due to the efforts of producer Goddard Lieberson, one gifted with that special knack of transferring a musical's quality onstage to the phonograph record. He emerges as the real hero here. I am a fan of Sondheim's. In my opinion he's one of the very few writers of note working for the stage. However, you must forgive me if I'm less than enthusiastic about this, his latest effort. It's one of the borrowed items, tracing its musical lineage back to the Vienna of Strauss—or perhaps a bit further, as the name implies, to pretensions of Mozart. The book, by Hugh Wheeler, is lifted too, from an early screenplay by Ingmar Bergman, *Smiles of a Summer Night*. As the titles imply, it's perfect summer entertainment, easy, lightweight, frothy and, finally, imminently forgettable. As recording it works very well indeed, capturing all the fine ensemble playing and with crisp clarity, rings out each brilliant, witty lyric. Glynis Johns' catch-throat voice neatly finds and holds the actress she's portraying, especially in the record and the production's high point, "Send in the Clowns." I even thought Hermione Gingold's hilariously inept non-singing perfectly suited to her role. Still, it all just doesn't add up to very

much and the record can be really enjoyed only by those who've seen the show. For my taste I'd prefer less *Eine Kleine* and some more *Nachtmusik*.

While I'm still on Sondheim, I'd like to mention the recording of the one performance only of *Sondheim: A Musical Tribute* (Warner Brothers 2-WS-2705). It features a galaxy of stage stars from his shows doing a wide range of his musical numbers, both the solo efforts and collaborations. It, too, has had an excellent production and captures all that elusive, immediately happening, live presence. The real high spots are the selections from *West Side Story* and *Gypsy*—by the way, Virginia Sandifur and especially Alice Playten hilariously demonstrate how "If Mama Was Married," from the latter show, should be performed.

Sondheiming it, also, is *Candide* (Columbia S2X-32923) for which he wrote some new lyrics for Leonard Bernstein's brilliant music. This is a revival doing nearly sellout business and near the top of the artistic heap of the current shows. This near-opera, originally produced in the late Fifties to rave notices and little or no business, is having brand new life breathed into it via Hugh Wheeler's new book, heavy on the fun. Strangely, in view of its less than success, the album from that first production is still regarded as something of a classic and sold quite well. Then it seemed to work as record and not as theatre. Now, just the opposite is true. The new show is primarily visual and you just can't transfer that to a recording no matter how good the production. Perhaps Lieberson could have helped a bit, though. I'm sure he'd have picked up the pace and pruned down this far too long recording. It sounds as if much of it would be funny if it could only be

seen but eventually becomes only tiresome. I'd suggest you search out a collector's shop and pick up the original to enjoy all those lovely voices making mock love to this superb Bernstein score.

On record, the most exciting of the newer shows is *Raisin* (Columbia KS-32754), borrowed from the late Lorraine Hansberry's brilliant play, *A Raisin in the Sun*. It works in all ways. It's black and beautiful, joyfully and joyously so, while still being grit real. The fine cast plays so well together that you have the feeling they really are a family, even on record. This family and ignited feeling is led off by Virginia Cappers in her Tony-winning role with a big, lovely voice dipped in bone-crunching honesty. The rest of the cast is only a whisper behind. Its rootings are firmly in Gershwin-esque operetta but that doesn't deter it from being very real and very alive. Finally, and most important, this recording accomplishes what all the others missed by miles. It instills that desire to see the show. It goes on my must-see list when it plays Los Angeles.

Three other shows make up the balance of the musicals that opened this season and are still running. All share one thing in common: each has hitched itself to a big female star. That's a habit musicals slipped into in the Fifties and it seems a hard one to break. *Irene* (Columbia KS-32266) is a very tired retread of a Twenties musical that follows in the wide nostalgia path laid down by *No, No, Nanette*. It's been retailored to suit the talents of Debbie Reynolds. There are two major problems with both the show and the record. First, you're either a Reynolds fan or you're not. I'm not. If you don't care for the lady there really isn't too much left to enjoy. There are a few meager moments of fun handed out by George S. Irving and Patsy Kelly but they are so few and far between that they just aren't enough. Then, judged as pure recording, it sounds like one of those old hit collections of another era, a long line of unrelated hit songs just strung together without reason. This may be an inherent fault in sticking tunes in a show that weren't written for it. In any case, it's only for the most diehard Reynolds' fans. So, I'll pass.

Over *Here* (Columbia KS-32961) hitched onto the Andrews Sisters and in

so doing tried to borrow the spirit of the Forties, all without much success. The major fault here is easily spottable. It lies with the composers. Someone should have told the Sherman Brothers that they were no longer writing for Disney. It sounds as if they owned exactly one old 78 rpm by Glenn Miller and wore it out rewriting it for every song in the show. It all turns out a flat look at an era without a trace of affection. What the record does have going for it is Patty Andrews, who treats those Sherman molehills like mountains and almost Mohammeds it, especially in her happy, snappy reading of "Where Did the Good Times Go?" Janie Sell also comes to life a couple of times and whips out her role that won her a Tony. As valiant as these ladies try, with this music it's a hard uphill battle, and the audience—and especially the record buyer—finally ends up losing. I'm told that the real magic begins after the final curtain calls when Patty and Maxene Andrews come out and do a long medley of their old wartime hits. Now if they would have only included that on the record. . . .

While both of those shows do offer a little something, *Lorelei* (MGM/Verve MV-5097-oc) has nothing going for it. Instead of merely borrowing or better yet doing a straightforward revival of the original *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, they stole the show, adding a couple of stale tunes to the frisky originals plus an epilog and prolog. At least they did have the good sense to steal Carol Channing to repeat her starmaking title role and she's managed to keep this leaky vehicle afloat on sheer personality. Now, if you really want a taste of all the original fun, those toe-tappy songs and an unschickly, young Channing, by all means get the original original.

What we're left with now is the hold-over still running and the recordings of the closed shows, some of which are on the road touring. Many of the closed shows didn't even come close to record. *Gigi* (RCA ABL-1-0404) and *Cyrano* (A&M SP-3702) unfortunately did. *Gigi* tried to do what *Carnival* managed so charmingly, transfer a film musical to the stage. What this one forgot—that the other so well remembered—is you must be able to bring something with you to the stage that film can't offer. This flat-footed re-rendering added nothing to

the original and managed to lose most of that fine film's charm. It is a lovely score, tried and proven, but the four new songs sound haphazardly thrown in and suspiciously like they are rejects from other shows. The record production is a mess, big and hollow with no small spark of life to lift it. Not one performer comes within even shouting distance of the nearly perfect film cast.

Cyrano was much too obviously after another *Man of La Mancha*. What it got instead was a big behemoth of a play with some music tossed in that just didn't work. The recording is way, way off both in intent and spirit. Since you're treated(?) to nearly the entire play here on this two-record set, early in the show it becomes painfully obvious that the music just gets in the way of the story. The record producer just didn't know what he was doing, I'm afraid. But then I don't know of any way this crashing bore could have been salvaged. Even Christopher Plummer, a Tony notwithstanding, sounds merely embarrassed by the whole proceedings. Chalk this one up to mere history. . . .

There are three long-runners from other seasons that all have something substantial to offer the record buyer. *Grease* (MGM 1-SE-34-oc) borrows its entire being from another era. It's at least done with a great deal of affection. A look back to the rock and rolling Fifties, it has drive and lots of raw energy in its talented cast. This more than makes up for what they often lack in experience. Unfortunately, it's chosen to settle for just one sound that time had to offer and misses, therefore, much of the volatile, dirty rush in the other rock of that time, settling for something like rock-safe. There's a high level of fun to be had here. The recording has a raggedy alive sound right in keeping with its jagged-edged off-Broadway original. Two of the cast members really stand out—and have since gone on to bigger and better things—Adrienne Barbeau (hilarious in "Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee"), and Barry Boswick (right on in his leather-jacketed and DA haircut role). The production people made a wise decision for the recording. They allowed the entire thing to play itself, so it's all very alive on the disc, working extremely well.

Pippin (Motown M-706-L) was given

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Left: Ben Gazzara stars as Erie Smith in the touring production of Eugene O'Neill's *Hughie*. Center: Joan and Lucky (DeeAnn Johnston and Terry Walker) are the tap maniacs in *Dames at Sea*. Right: Robert Merrill and Peg Murray are Tevye and Goldie in Los Angeles' CLO's *Fiddler on the Roof*.

IN TOUCH with theatre

The Robert Merrill production of *Fiddler on the Roof* in the Ahmanson is the absolute pinnacle. Once you reach this rarified atmosphere, there is no higher up you can go. Mr. Merrill, of course, is the renowned baritone on leave from the Metropolitan Opera and he certainly is the finest singing stage Tevye I have heard. His vocal artistry is in a class by itself, ample reason why a 7:00 Sunday performance was packed, wall to wall, with humanity. Peg Murray's Golde is perfection, something she has been striving toward in her three-year association with the role. Steven A. Bohm, dance captain of the original Broadway company, has taken over the direction. He has pulled it all together with a brilliance that gives the show fresh new insights and a headlong pace that not only heightens the old values but adds new dimensions of his own. When you are dealing with a contemporary musical masterpiece and can still discover new ways to gild the lily, you are a genius. When "Sabbath Prayer" arrives, he opens up his cyclorama and gives us not only Golde's family around her Friday night candles, but all of her neighbors around theirs as well. Of course, when you work this way, it means literally hundreds of extra hours of toil for a single effect. But obviously, that spectacle, plus the audience's ecstatic enjoyment of it, is well worth all that additional effort to Mr. Bohm. This is the stuff upon which great theatrical careers are made. All of the production values entrusted to Glenn Jordan have

been meticulously delineated so you know the faith has been kept. Boris Aronson's settings are more ingenious than ever and Robert Randolph has lit them, plus the people of Anatevka, with matchless skill. Don Walker's orchestrations as well as Milton Greene and Betty Walberg's vocal and dance arrangements have all been blended together under Anton Coppola's superb pit conducting in a manner that underscores an inescapable fact: Great musical theatre will never die. It will be around as long as there are people left on earth to appreciate it.

When Eugene O'Neill finished the first act of *Hughie*, he was so unhappy with it he never got around to writing the other four acts. Ten years ago I caught up with it in New York (with Jason Robards in the lead), and I thought it a terrible play. My opinion of it hasn't diminished in the past decade and I think Ben Gazzara's production is even worse. Martin Field, a director whose work I've never heard of, goes in for offstage sounds in great detail. He loves flushing toilets, the sound of the overhead EI and long pauses fraught with pregnant meaning. Since the play runs only an hour at a \$6.50 top, I suppose he is trying to give the customers their money's worth. After new desk clerk, Peter Maloney, has swept up and stared interminably into space, listening to the sounds of the night plumbing, Erie Smith ambles in. It is 4:00 in the morning and, for a solid hour, he philosophizes about his deceased friend,

Hughie, who formerly held down that job. It is my contention that Hughie died of boredom being a captive audience for him. If he were remotely interesting I wouldn't mind but he isn't. That is doubtless why O'Neill abandoned him in midstream, as it were. For the hour it takes to tick away his seedy chronicle, nobody in New York enters this particular hotel lobby. Most New Yorkers I know are night owls but none obviously reside in this fleabag. Mr. Gazzara is a fine actor as everybody knows. I first encountered him as the evil cadet in Calder Willingham's *End As a Man* and I thought him a definite bet for stardom. He has long proven my hunch to be entirely justified. But why he was attracted to this glum piece I have no idea. Like Anton Chekhov's *The Swan Song*, I guess it elevates an actor's ego to be center stage for a whole evening, enmeshed in a monologue. Mr. Gazzara is a resourceful actor but protracted coughing and laughing do not create indelible character touches. He does put on a fashion show of sorts, however. Ambling around in an oversize suit with pant cuffs forming little pools around his ankles, he rolls up his trousers to show you his white socks. He takes off his coat and shows you the pretty red garter he wears on a shirt sleeve and, finally, he doffs his hat to show you he still has his own hair. He never stops talking and I wish I could tell you that a little drama results from it. But none ever does. Why, I could go down to a

Continued on Page 90

ACT '74-'75

"Light through crystal prisms and rainbows" will be the theme of the American Conservatory Theatre program for 1974-75, the company's ninth season in San Francisco. William Ball, general director of the renowned repertory group, announced at a recent press conference.

The amiable director discussed the company's general plans and some of its problems with a select group of critics and reporters at an informal midmorning coffee klatch.

"We'll be reviving two of our greatest successes," he said. "The Taming of the Shrew and Cyrano de Bergerac. The latter play returns for an unprecedented third consecutive season in the company repertory. We'll also present seven new theatre works, making a total of more than 100 plays which ACT has produced since establishing its home in the Bay Area in 1967."

The new productions include Shakespeare's *King Richard III*, the season opener on October 12, and Tom Stoppard's *Jumpers*, opening on December 17. Both of these productions will be directed by Ball himself.

Jumpers, Ball explained, fuses elements of farce, crime melodrama and sharp satire in its story of an addled philosophy professor, his young songstress wife, her psychiatrist-lover and their involvement in a bizarre murder case.

Ball stressed that, even though he is ACT's general director, he is by no means solely responsible for the group's phenomenal success. "I think of the company as the achievement of a great many people," he said with a smile. "Many different actors, writers, technicians and, of course, several other directors."

Edward Hastings, who has been one of Ball's colleagues since ACT's inception, will stage Elmer Rice's *Street Scene*, a classic drama of New York tenement life. This production will open on February 4, 1975. Allen Fletcher, a man who has previously translated and directed two Ibsen plays for the company, will add *The Pillars of Society* to the repertory on October 15, 1974.

(A certain pattern seems to have evolved with these three directors, over the years they have worked together. Ball consistently directs the classic dramas, those works which require breadth



William Ball is the founder and General Director of the American Conservatory Theatre.

and scope and permit him to stretch his vivid theatrical imagination; Hastings regularly directs revivals of plays which were popular in the American theatre in the Twenties and Thirties but which, for one reason or another, have more or less been relegated to the library shelves; and Fletcher seems to choose—or be assigned—the plays which are realistic, sometimes pedantic, or contain social comment.)

"We're particularly excited about a work called *Horatio*, a play by a wonderful writer named Ron Whyte, which we'll present on November 26 of this year," Ball said, continuing. "*Horatio* is a play with music and will give marvelous singing and dancing opportunities to the ensemble of our company. It's been a great success in St. Louis and is currently playing at the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. It's about Horatio Alger, whose 19th-century tales of rags to riches placed a real stamp on American culture.... Incidentally," Ball went on, chuckling, "did you know that *Horatio Alger* is Richard Nixon's favorite author? There's no doubt that Alger's works have come to comprise a major part of America's national mythology!"

When the murmurs of amusement had subsided, and when raised eyebrows had descended again after that remark, Ball revealed that *Horatio*, as well as Brecht-Weill's *The Three-Penny Opera* (opening on April 8, 1975) will be staged by guest directors. Allen Fletcher will direct Peter Barnes' *The Ruling Class*, which opens on March 18, 1975.

This, including the revivals, completes the list of nine plays for the season's repertory.

"What are you planning to do at the Marines?" someone asked. (The Marines Memorial Theatre on Sutter Street is a smaller house where ACT usually stages secondary productions or sponsors a touring company.)

"We have a project in mind for the Marines," Ball replied. "But we're not ready to publicly discuss it yet. It's my hope that we can use this theatre to stage some new plays. We're beginning to develop writers of our own."

ACT was recently able, through a grant, to purchase property adjacent to its current home, the Geary Theatre. This space was formerly a large bookstore and will be remodeled to provide new offices, classroom space for the company's training program, and a smaller theatre with a capacity of perhaps 299 seats.

This writer was interested to find out if the company is making a conscious effort to employ talented students who emerge from the training program.

"Oh, yes," said Ball. "Each year we try to give jobs to three or four outstanding students who fit into our scheme of things."

The director expressed his optimism about the '74-'75 season and revealed that "for the first time all the money we need is with us on time and in the bank. We don't have to borrow on pledges. In fact, we've never been this secure before. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Cyril Magnin, who has worked tirelessly to help us and who has developed into a real Renaissance kind of art patron. I'm hoping that our list of subscribers will reach a total of 21,000 this year."

"Which of the better-known actors will return for the new season?"

Ball smiled. "Right now [early August] we can't say. We're negotiating. We'll have to say, for the moment, things are a bit up in the air in that regard.... I imagine about two-thirds of the company will be with us again this year. That's the way things usually work out, percentagewise. About a third of the '74-'75 company will be new."

Peter Donat. Sada Thompson. Marc Singer. *Hello, out there! Are you listening?*

—DOUGLAS DEAN

THE FABULOUS INVALID KEEPS ON TRUCKIN'

On one level, the New York theatrical scene could not be more depressing. Fewer shows open on Broadway every year, and most of those that do are far from adventurous. Ticket prices for Broadway are outrageous (\$12-15 top for most musicals) and the escalating demands of the theatrical unions are gradually pricing off-Broadway out of existence, except where there are foundation grants or other forms of funding available. Several Broadway houses are standing empty and have been for months. A couple of others are scheduled for demolition. The few new ones that are going up tend to be aridly modern and too large for any sort of real intimacy.

On the other hand, there is good theatre to be seen. The emotional jag of the Sixties seems to be at last retreating into the past, and once again there is a concern that a show be good, and not merely "now." Some new plays are being done, and some older ones are being revived—and proving far less passé than one might expect.

Ulysses in Nighttown was not one of the winners. What was regarded as exciting *avant-garde* in the late 1950's (when it was originally presented off-Broadway) was a little old hat in the 1970's, despite the addition of a good deal of nudity, and solid performances by a large and able cast that included Zero Mostel, as Leopold Bloom; Fionnuala Flanagan as Molly; and Swen Swenson, as the ominous Hermaphroditic Madam, Bella-Bello. Marjorie Barkentin's dramatization of James Joyce's mammoth novel *Ulysses*, emerged as a kind of overproduced synopsis, a skeleton of a play without enough flesh on its bones, too abstruse for those who don't know the Joyce original, and too skimpy for those who do. The main events of the novel were sketched in clearly enough, but the emotional impact was slight.

Jumpers, by British playwright Tom Stoppard, had a relatively short run despite rave reviews from Clive Barnes, a gorgeous performance by Brian Bedford, and a spectacular team of tumblers under the direction of choreographer

Dennis Nahat. Mr. Stoppard's philosophic who-done-it was just too self-consciously clever, too unfocused, and too verbose to appeal to American audiences in general, and too expensive to be kept running for the limited audience that might have liked it.

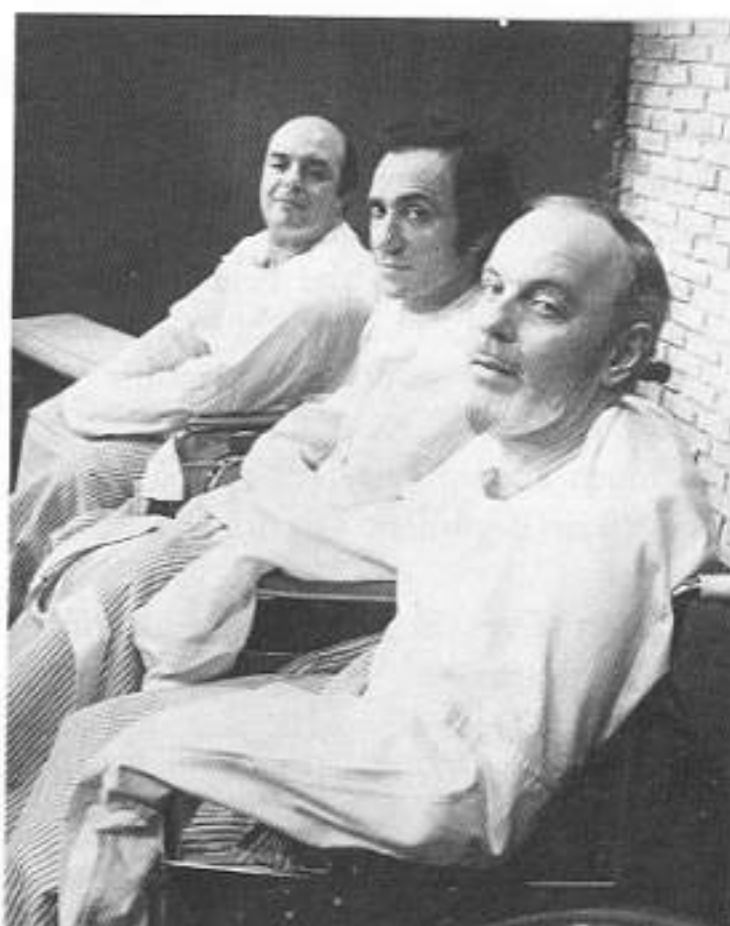
One of the surprises of the season was Jose Quintero's revival of Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, which opened for a limited engagement—and turned into a smash hit, winning a Tony Award for Colleen Dewhurst and a nomination for her co-star, Jason Robards.

The production has been hailed as the ideal incarnation of O'Neill's drama about an outsized Irish-American virgin, Josie Hogan, who hides her loneliness and sensitivity behind a brash pretext of being the town whore—and makes the mistake of falling in love with an alcoholic actor. And certainly the cast is an admirable one. But Mr. Quintero's production, like his original Broadway production of *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*, seems hyped up, strident, and a bit forced. It also has some dull patches, which I don't think are inherent in the writing.

Miss Dewhurst, as Josie, and Ed Flanders, as her bibulous, pugnacious, Machiavellian father, are able enough actors to overcome the directorial goosing a great deal of the time, but only Jason Robards is able to free himself of it



Left: Zero Mostel, as Leopold Bloom, is unmanned, walked on, horse-whipped and generally mistreated by transvestite Swen Swenson in a fantasy sequence from *Ulysses in Nighttown* (photo by Friedman-Abeles). Center: Jill Clayburgh (left) is an ex-musical comedy star who tries to make a comeback at a political rally while her husband, Brian Bedford, attempts to compose a speech for a philosophical congress in *Jumpers* (photo by Friedman-Abeles). Right: Josie Hogan (Colleen Dewhurst) expects a night of love with her actor-landlord, James Tyrone (Jason Robards, Jr.), but finds he is too guilt-ridden for love. Her father (Ed Flanders, right) discovers them as dawn breaks in *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (photo by Martha Swope).



Left: Doris Roberts, Henry Sutton and Paul Benedict as patient, masseur, and head psychiatrist in *Ravenswood* which is the first half of Terrence McNally's *Bad Habits*. Center: Michael Lombard is an Oriental sadist; F. Murray Abraham is a passionate transvestite; and Emory Bass is a hopeless alcoholic in the second of the two plays, *Dunelawn*. Right: Tito Goya, as "Cupcakes," attempts to fend off some unwelcome sexual attention from a fellow inmate (Felipe Torres) in Miguel Pinero's *Short Eyes*. All photos by Friedman-Abeles.

completely.

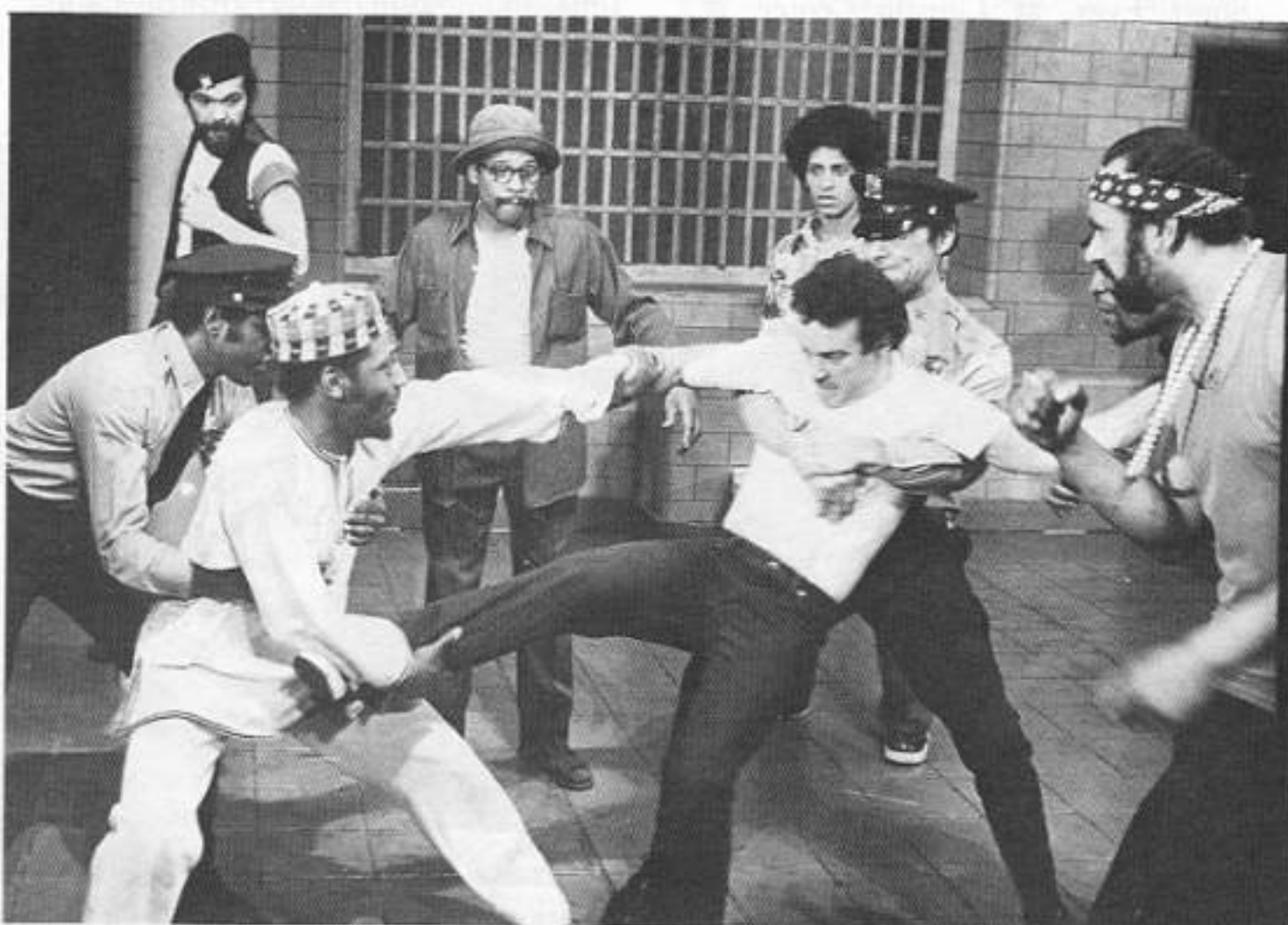
As the alcoholic actor James Tyrone (another version of the same character he played so tellingly in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*), Mr. Roberts is extraordinary, sketching with sure hand the man who is congenitally unable to perceive women except as either mothers or whores—and is therefore incapable of real sexual love. He starts out so quietly and casually that for a long while he seems almost to be doing nothing, throwing the role away, and riding on his charm. The charm is the mask that hides a lacerating guilt and self-hatred, as shocking to us as to Josie when the mask finally falls. And when he reaches his final boozy outpouring, in the long moonlit scene with her, his powers manifest themselves spectacularly.

Miss Dewhurst is a remarkable actress, and in some ways she is magnificent. But something is missing from her portrait of this embattled virgin who finds her one desperate offer of love rejected by a man who can accept nothing from her except mothering. (A woman friend of mine, deep in the feminist movement, left the theatre in a rage, muttering imprecations about plays that glorify woman's noble sacrifice. I don't think that's what O'Neill wrote, but that's what emerges when we fail to see the full extent of Josie's rage and anguish at being rejected by a man she cannot even blame because he is so pitiable.)

Three of the most interesting of the plays on Broadway are in fact off-Broadway shows that moved uptown: *Bad Habits*, by Terrence McNally; *Short Eyes*, by Miguel Pinero; and the revival of the musical *Candide*.

Bad Habits consists of two one-act plays, each of which is set in a private sanitarium for the mentally or emotionally disturbed. The first play, *Ravenswood*, deals with the problems of several couples, all of whom have discovered they cannot live with each other and cannot live apart. It is a sort of

Psychopathology of Everyday Life cast in comic form. One couple (played by Doris Roberts and Michael Lombard) have almost murdered each other several times, "accidentally." Even the doctor (Paul Benedict) is confined to a wheelchair, as a result of being pushed downstairs by his wife after he criticized her lieder singing. There is also a combative pair of would-be movie stars (Cynthia Harris and F. Murray Abraham), and a pair of aging upper-class homosexuals (Emory Bass and J. Frank Lucas) whose relationship has degenerated into an



In *Short Eyes*, J.J. Johnson, as a Black Muslim, tangles with Irishman Joseph Carberry, while guards Chuck Bergansky and Hollis Barnes try to separate them. Other inmates (Bimbo, Kenny Steward, Tito Goya, Ben Jefferson, and Felipe Torres) look on (photo by Friedman-Abeles).

endless battle for the affections of a pet dog—until one of them, rejected by the beast, tosses it out a window.

The second play, *Dunelawn*, is more purposeful, and deals with the ulterior motives of many of those who devote themselves to "helping" others: the helping hand is revealed as a sadistic and manipulative one, which delights in its own ability to bully and control those it seeks to help. The central figure is Nurse Benson (Cynthia Harris) who has rid herself of all her "bad habits" and is now out to reform the world. But even she seems almost a benevolent figure compared to Dr. Toynbee (played with manic surrealism by J. Frank Lucas), the gleefully incomprehensible doctor whose notion of helping his patients is to drug them into mindless euphoria and insensibility.

They're a strange pair of plays. They are very funny, undeniably, and generally well-acted. But somehow disturbing. The ideas are real, and generally valid. But the characters are not. They seem to consist of little more than their symptoms, or their vices, as in a comedy of humors. Or a revue sketch. Mr. McNally seems to have conjured up problems and situations that are real and disturbing—too disturbing, perhaps, for the kind of comedy he had in mind. Consequently, he has produced a play that is too unsettlingly real to be quite farcical, and too stylized to be entirely real.

Short Eyes, at Lincoln Center, is something of a social phenomenon as

well as a theatre piece. It grew out of the activities of The Family, a theatre unit composed largely of former prison inmates who were brought together by a mutual interest in theatre, which had established itself as the resident company at the Theatre of Riverside Church. The group's production of *Short Eyes*, by Miguel Pinero, received so much acclaim that it was moved to the Vivian Beaumont Theatre in Lincoln Center.

Short Eyes is a violent, scarifying prison drama set in the New York House of Detention. Its plot centers around a sex offender (known in prison jargon as Short Eyes), arrested for molesting little girls. Even in the prison pecking order, he is the lowest of the low, shunned and persecuted by all, and eventually destroyed by his fellow inmates. But the central action is only one of many ingredients that make the play exciting. Pinero has created a large and rich gallery of characters, and provided them with ample opportunities to interact. The result is richness of texture and a field day for a group of actors whose forte seems to be ensemble playing.

William Carden makes Short Eyes a genuinely haunted figure, and an actor billed only as Bimbo does some really remarkable acting as the Puerto Rican who feels sympathy as well as loathing for Short Eyes, and ultimately attempts to defend him. Bimbo is the most powerful listener I've seen in a long, long time, and despite the fact that he has little to say, he ultimately dominates the

play, as a sort of silent *raisonneur*. But it is impossible to single out individuals. The cast is large, and they are all good.

Mr. Pinero has tried to say too much, and to make too many points, with the result that the play's final impact is diluted. But it is exciting, often funny, and ultimately a chilling indictment of a system of so-called justice which can subject men *who have not even been convicted* to a murderous and brutalizing existence.

The cream of the crop is *Candide*. The heaviness of the show's original libretto sank two previous productions, despite the fact that the score has an almost ferociously loyal following. But the Chelsea Theatre Center in Brooklyn was wise enough to acquire the services of Harold Prince as director, and Mr. Prince, in turn, enlisted his collaborators on *A Little Night Music*, Hugh Wheeler and Stephen Sondheim, to rewrite the book and refurbish the lyrics. The result was a smash hit at the Chelsea, which then moved to Broadway. And fortunately, Mr. Prince and his associates have had sense enough to preserve the show's downtown virtues in the uptown setting—even if they had to rebuild the Broadway Theatre from stem to stern to do it.

Candide is a sheer and unmitigated delight in every department. It is the freshest, liveliest, and most inventive production in years. Mr. Wheeler's book is light, tight and fast-moving, capturing everything in the Voltaire original except perhaps its occasional ponderous-



Left: "Oh Happy We"—Inspired by Dr. Pangloss's example, Candide and Cunegonde do a bit of experimenting with the physical joys of life in the revival of *Candide*. Right: After incredible misadventures, Candide finally discovers that the secret of a happy life is work. When he tells this to the frivolous and fun-loving Cunegonde and the Old Lady, they are, to say the least, nonplussed.



Left: Charles Ludlam is Marguerite Gautier and Bill Vehr is her ardent suitor, Armand Duval, in Mr. Ludlam's oddball adaptation of the Dumas classic, *Camille*. Center: Helen Hanft is Hanna, a cashier in a 42nd Street movie house, and Steven Davis is a narcissist from Arizona in Tom Ewen's *Why Hanna's Skirt Won't Stay Down* (photo by Jack Mitchell). Right: Tony Award winner Virginia Capers is Mama, and Ernestine Jackson is her daughter-in-law, Ruth, in *Raisin*.

ness. And Mr. Prince has staged it like an inspired blend of a children's fairy-tale and *Hellzapoppin*. (Where else would one find a romantic hero singing a love duet while tied up in a gunny sack? Or a soaring lyric sweetly sung by a pair of fluffy pink sheep? Or a cow that drops dead in the middle of the pastoral finale?)

Designers Eugene and Franne Lee have created an environment that distributes the action around, among, and on top of the audience (there are 10 different acting areas) and which flies, rolls, and generally has a life of its own. The costumes are elegant in a slap-dash way, and in period without being pedantic about it. And they really look like clothes, rather than fashion plates or chic straitjackets, as is so often the case in period pieces. Choreographer Patricia Birch, like some light-hearted mixmaster, keeps the stage churning with constant motion.

Mark Baker, as *Candide*, is an overgrown elf who manages to project the proper degree of dunderheaded optimism without ever seeming merely stupid. And Maureen Brennan, as the morally pliant Cunegonde, is half courtesan, half cheerleader, coyly confident that her charms are sufficient to see her through any situation that may arise. And the rest of the cast—June Gable as the resourceful Old Lady who joins them in their adventures; Sam Freed as

Cunegonde's handsome, self-righteous, narcissistic brother, Maximilian; and Deborah St. Darr as the round-heeled chambermaid, Paquette—bring to it enormous vitality and resourcefulness. Lewis J. Stadlen as Voltaire, Dr. Pangloss, the Governor of Montevideo, and sundry other sages and mountebanks, turns in a *tour-de-force* performance: his Panglossian dissertation on the beneficent aspects of syphilis is a gem in itself.

The whole cast has the knack of making singing seem as natural as speaking, so that the musical numbers emerge, not as operatic set pieces, but as spontaneous outbursts of exuberant feeling. The manner is frankly presentational—but without ever losing a sense of logical human behavior. (The style that Mr. Prince has forged is, one suspects, very close to the way Brecht ought to be played—and never is!)

But the real hero of the occasion is Voltaire. The cynical old Frenchman knew nothing is quite so funny as disasters—so long as they are happening to other people. *Candide*, Cunegonde, Paquette, and Maximilian are perpetually being kidnaped, raped, pillaged, shipwrecked, shanghaied, betrayed or beaten. They are constantly losing their virtue, their clothes, or their worldly goods. The Old Lady has even lost one of her buttocks. But they never quite lose their essential innocence. They are

always convinced that if they can just get through this one, everything will be all right. And the message that emerges is a bracing one: life is an unending series of catastrophes, but it can be fun along the way if you don't let it get you down—so just keep on truckin'!

If you're planning a trip to New York and can see only one show, *Candide* is the one to see. If you aren't planning to visit the city—well, *Candide* just might be worth the trip.

If Voltaire prospers on playfully irreverent treatment uptown, another French writer, Alexandre Dumas, fils, gets similar treatment downtown, with the Ridiculous Theatre Company's production of *Camille*, in which adapter-director Charles Ludlam plays the title role.

Mr. Ludlam calls his adaptation "a tear-jerker," so we know immediately that parody is afoot. And as parody it succeeds spectacularly, providing a glorious send-up of everything from the Romantic Period to movies of the 1930's. I think perhaps it is the only show I've ever seen that had its audience in stitches during the overture.

Mr. Ludlam's performance almost defies description. He's no female impersonator in the usual sense of the word: he makes no attempt to create the illusion of being a woman. The hairiness of chest he displays is sufficient to contradict that. But somehow he com-



Left: In the TOSOS production of Lanford Wilson's *The Great Nebula in Orion*, Diane Tarleton is the suburban matron and Kathleen Callahan is a fashion designer who happens to be a lesbian (photo by Allan Noseworthy III). Right: In the pornographic film sequence from *Naked Lunch*, Mark Simon as The Author, gets into the act with Ray Munro, as Johnny (photo by Peter Hujar).

bines a welter of disparate elements—a bit of Greta Garbo here, a touch of Tallulah there, a dollop of vintage ham, a touch of burlesque, a brief trumpet blare of melodrama—and blends them all into a satisfying if schizophrenic whole.

But the really extraordinary thing is that while parodying the play mercilessly, he almost manages to make us take it seriously. By some strange alchemy he is able to make his performance dramatically valid just when he's being most utterly absurd. Shades of Bea Lillie!

The unifying factor that ties up the loose ends of Ludlam's performance, and makes it unflaggingly funny, is that he almost never responds directly to anything. He listens, and takes in information like a computer. The wheels click behind his eyes, and immediately he gears up for the response the moment seems to call for. The real human response must always be censored in favor of the response that is kinder, prettier, nobler, or more socially acceptable. (Or if a spontaneous response does come through, it is generally highly subversive.) The result is not only a devastating parody of a whole generation of Hollywood film stars—but a hilariously blazing indictment of human hypocrisy in general. We roar with laughter because he shows us with an all-too-painful clarity what phonies we are.

Mr. Ludlam is a bizarre and special talent, but a genuine one, and I hope he may continue to be as successful as this in creating vehicles for his own unique brand of tomfoolery.

Another bit of tomfoolery on the off-Broadway scene is Tom Eyen's *Why*

Hanna's Skirt Won't Stay Down. The play is set in a Coney Island funhouse, and concerns one Hanna (Helen Hanft) from Springfield, Illinois, whose checkered career has culminated in a job as a cashier in a 42nd Street grindhouse. She takes refuge from an unappreciative world in the funhouse, to pursue her sole remaining pleasure: standing over the breeze-hole. There she encounters a beautiful but narcissistic young man named Arizona (Steven Davis) who, like her, finds the funhouse a retreat. But his particular pleasure is to haunt the hall of mirrors in his star-spangled, red-white-and-blue bikini. (He is also the

archtype of all the insubstantial young men in Hanna's life.) Hanna's sister Sophie also turns up in the funhouse: a bald-headed Avon lady, locked in perpetual rivalry with Hanna for attention, and for possession of the young man.

In all fairness, I must say that the play has its fervent admirers, and it has received some rave reviews. For many people, it would seem, Tom Eyen can do no wrong. But to me it seemed trivial, synthetic, pointless, and deliberately vulgar. It may be there is a level of serious intent in Mr. Eyen's work, but one has to dig through such a thicket of put-ons, camp, and inside jokes that it hardly seems worth the effort.

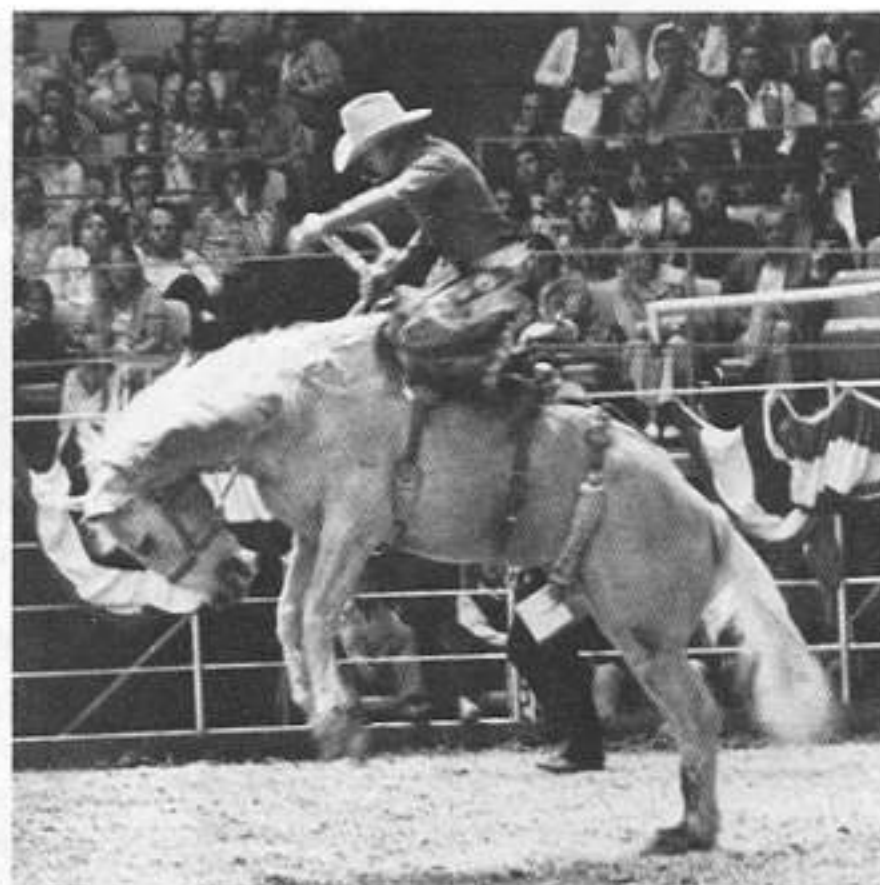
Raisin, the Broadway musical version of *A Raisin in the Sun*, by the late Lorraine Hansberry, is not a perfect work, but it is a human and moving one. Robert Nemiroff, the husband of the playwright, in collaboration with Charlotte Saltzberg, has ably adapted the play, expanding it to take in the busy street life of the south side as well as the events in the Younger apartment. Judd Woldin and Robert Britton have provided a serviceable score that occasionally—in a hymn called "He Come Down This Morning" and a razzmatazz number about changing racial mores called "Not Any More"—generates real excitement. The show's principal flaw is too much music, particularly in the second act where the songs begin to stop the action and the play sometimes drags.

Virginia Capers received a well-earned Tony Award for her performance as Mama. As a singer as well as an

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Billy Blackwell plays an aging queen in the throes of a crackup in Lanford Wilson's *The Madness of Lady Bright*, and Robin Jacober and John Ingle are figures from his past and his dreams (photo by Allan Noseworthy III).



special report - sports

by Allan Leopold
photos by Hy Chase

MARLBORO COUNTRY!

Breathes there a man with soul
so dead who never to himself
hath said: Would that my
blood were running red as a native cow-
hand?

I think it goes something like that. But, even if it doesn't, the All-American Rodeo is still one of the most patriotic exhibitions still in our folklore. To attest to this, they are annually packed across our great country at such popular watering holes as: Cheyenne, Denver, Ft. Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Phoenix and Salinas. Even Canada loves the rodeo and the Calgary Stampede is one of their biggest yearly events. Every season Cotton Rosser brings the Golden State Rodeo into the Forum. Our national anthem is played, cowboys ride herd in the arena, carrying international flags and a cowgirl on a white horse is encircled in flame, holding high the star-spangled banner. Generally a covered wagon, depicting the early California trek, is galloped in to illustrate the struggle our forebears made to arrive here. This year, four white chariot horses were raced around the sawdust in tribute to Ben Hur and his dependency on that noble animal. A highlight of this 1974 rodeo was the introduction of buffalo, certainly the oldest living creatures of our great Northwest. And with the buffalo came the authentic American



cowboys. The intrepid, lean, hard-riding breed that lassoed calves, steers and wild broncs, and tied this land together. As I watched each spectacular event, punctuated by sweating animals and deter-

mined cowboys, I was caught up in the wonder of it all. Here is a sport extraordinarily foreign to my own childhood on the shores of Lake Erie in Cleveland, Ohio. What makes a cowboy climb on the back of a bucking animal and hang on for dear life, always at the risk of permanent injury, maybe even death?

I watched gates swing open and a wild mustang, nostrils flaring, hoofs pawing the air, shot into the ring, the cowboy showing acres of daylight between his muscular buttocks and the saddle. The crowd went wild, roaring its approval only as long as the rider stayed on. As soon as he parted company with the animal, the cheering stopped. For rodeo fans don't like losers. Only a cowboy lighting up that WOW score in neon lights makes a solid hit with them. When the cowboy has scored his points, then 19-year-old Mark Butler moves in with his bronc-catcher. Riding flank-style, the cowboy transfers to Mark's horse and rides out of danger. I talked to Mark, who hails from Tucson, Arizona, backstage:

"When I was eleven I left home and went to the Trinity Alps in Northern California. I earned money running four-week pack trips for thirteen or fourteen people back in the mountains. John Snow of Rodeos, Inc., had a lot of confidence in me and he started me in

junior rodeos. This takes 100 per cent dedication as you have to rope five days a week. I organized and put on the first high school rodeo ever seen in America that was sanctioned by the Athletic Association of the state. It cost about \$12,000 and I raised the money by talking to community businessmen. I've racked up darn near 15,000 miles each year for the past seven summers just goin' down the old rodeo road."



C.R. Jones, the Marlboro Man, hails from Pomerene, Arizona, population 60. He's a steer wrestler and I asked him, "How did you get to be the Marlboro man?"

"A free-lance photographer by the name of George Anderson spotted me and talked Ken Krome of the Philip Morris-Leo Burnett Tobacco Co. into hiring me. Now he works for Marlboro too. I've been the Marlboro Man for six years now. Twice a year they take a lot of pictures of me and I make about \$2,000 on it. But I don't even smoke. I been rodeoin' all my life. It makes me a livin'. At the matinee today I placed second and won \$500. I've got a bulldoggin' team with me I own. They're ex-quarter horse racehorses that ran at Los Alamitos under the colors of Stan Immenshau. They're called Paint and Peanuts. I've also got a hazin' horse."

"From what fraternity?"

"A hazin' horse lines the steer out. Keeps 'em runnin' straight. The bulldogs catch the steer off the runnin' horse and bring 'em to a stop so's the cowboy can throw the steer flat on its side."

"How much longer do you plan on rodeoin'?"

"Five or six years and then I'll hang it up. I'd rather rodeo than anything in the world."

"With a face like yours, did you ever do a movie?"

"Once. *Junior Bonner*. I bulldogged steers for Steve McQueen. It was an honest rodeo picture and Steve asked my opinion on a lot of things. Ben Johnson got me a speaking part in it too. But that director, Sam Peckinpah, sure is mean. He used to throw fits. He's a mean son-of-a-bitch."

"How much do you weigh?"

"A hundred and eighty-five pounds. I been this way since I was 19 years old. I do a lot of runnin' and I punch the bag. And my rodeoin' keeps me fit."

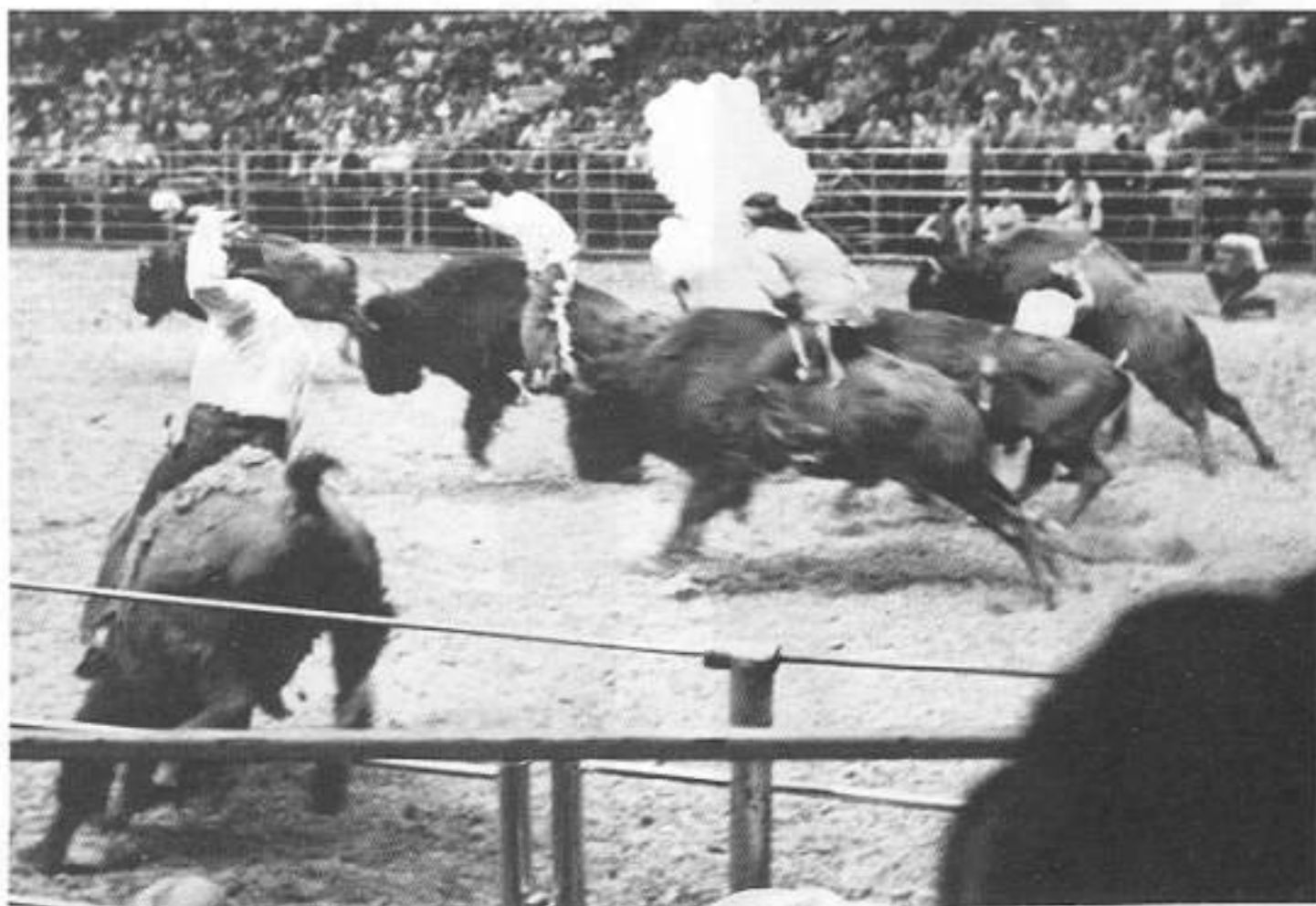


Sunny Wilson, outrider at Hollywood Race Track, has a very exclusive job. "I was born in Cow Town, New Jersey. At the age of nine I began bareback riding. Bill Hotchkins invited me to join RCA Rodeo in my teens. At Santa Anita I went to work for Bob Wheeler who trained R.V. Whitney's horses. Now I'm the lead pony rider at Hollywood Park. There are only seven of us in California. We belong to Teamsters Local 495."



Mike Adams, a bareback rider, is good-looking enough to hold down an interesting sideline. "I'm the Mary Mahan Wild West Shirt representative. I wear them and go around the western states modeling pictures. I've been a professional rodeo bareback rider since '68. My best year netted me \$8,000 for the best point score of 84 in Lehi, Utah. I've been kicked in the head once and got my arm broken but it's all part of the game. In rodeo, the challenge is the greatest thing. You have to conquer an animal. My dad, Gene Adams, started me riding when I was a kid two years old. I'll cover 75,000 air and ground miles easy in one year following the rodeo."







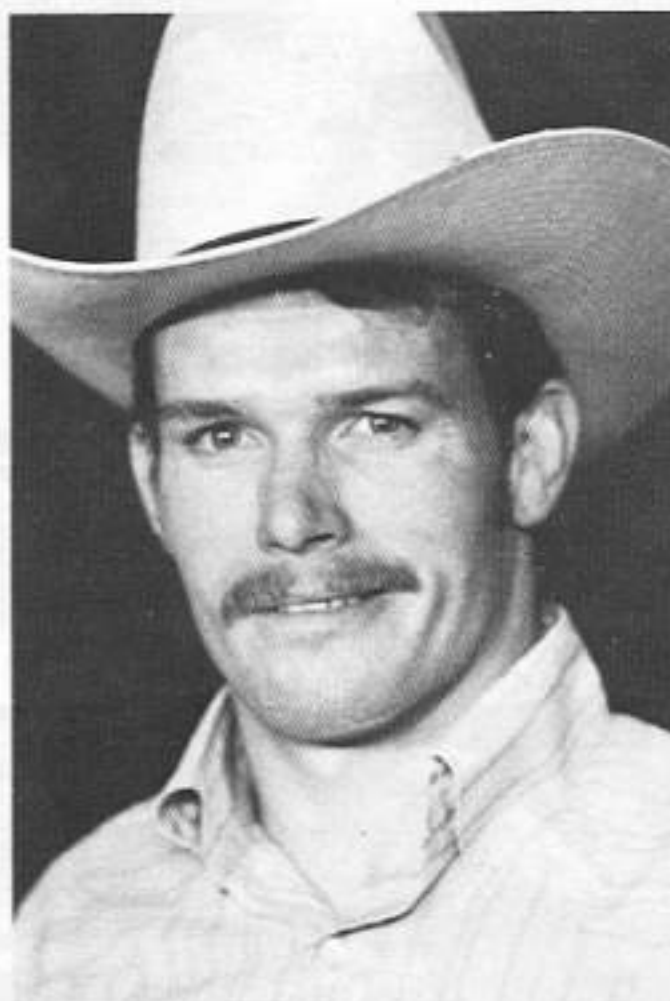
Will Landers, 23, rides Brahma bulls. Easily the most dangerous event of the rodeo, Will has had more bones broken and more internal injuries than Evel Knievel. Why does he do it? "I've been bull riding since I was fifteen. When I turned twenty I joined RCA. It's exciting, interesting, a challenge. I've got a full-time job with horse trainer 99 at the training farm in Tulare run by Greg Ward. Once a year I get wiped out. At the Clovis Rodeo, I fell underneath a bull and he stepped on my chest. He weighed 1,900 pounds and he punctured my lung. I had a lot of pain. That bull ruptured my kidney, my liver and he broke three of my ribs on my right side. He put a hole in my diaphragm and another hole in my bladder. In the rodeo we've got an ambulance but no doctor that travels with it. I spent four months at St. Agnes Hospital in Fresno.

"This year, at the San Diego Rodeo, I drew bull 88. When the whistle blew after eight seconds, I went to get off but old 88 threw his head up and hit my head and knocked me plumb out. He kept throwing my unconscious body up in the air. He gored his horns into me and put a couple of holes in my back . . . itty-bitty holes . . . not big ones. I was in a San Diego hospital for the weekend but I just got up and left. I got tired of being in the hospital. I placed second and third at Turlock, California, and second at Palm Springs. In Paso Robles last year, I placed first and got \$400. It's all a hobby with me. It'll take a while to develop my riding technique.

When I'm out in the arena, I pay no attention to the crowd. I want a good draw on the bull. Bull riding means the whole world to me. I couldn't live without it."

"How do you feel on a ferocious bull?"

"I'm frightened. Who wouldn't be?"



Glenn Younger hails from Grand Junction, Colorado, and is a college graduate.

"Shoot, I been ridin' Brahmas at all the rodeos. I just come from Edmonton in Canada. Brahmas are a real challenge to me. They're exciting. It costs \$30 for an entry fee and ya gotta stick on the bull for eight seconds. My biggest money take was last year at Ft. Worth. I won \$2,170, broke my wrist and my kneecap but scored 74, 73 and 68 on

three bulls. On the side, I shoe horses and I'm a professional bail bondsman. I own the Colorado Bonding Co. I've got a Master's degree in business administration from Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado."

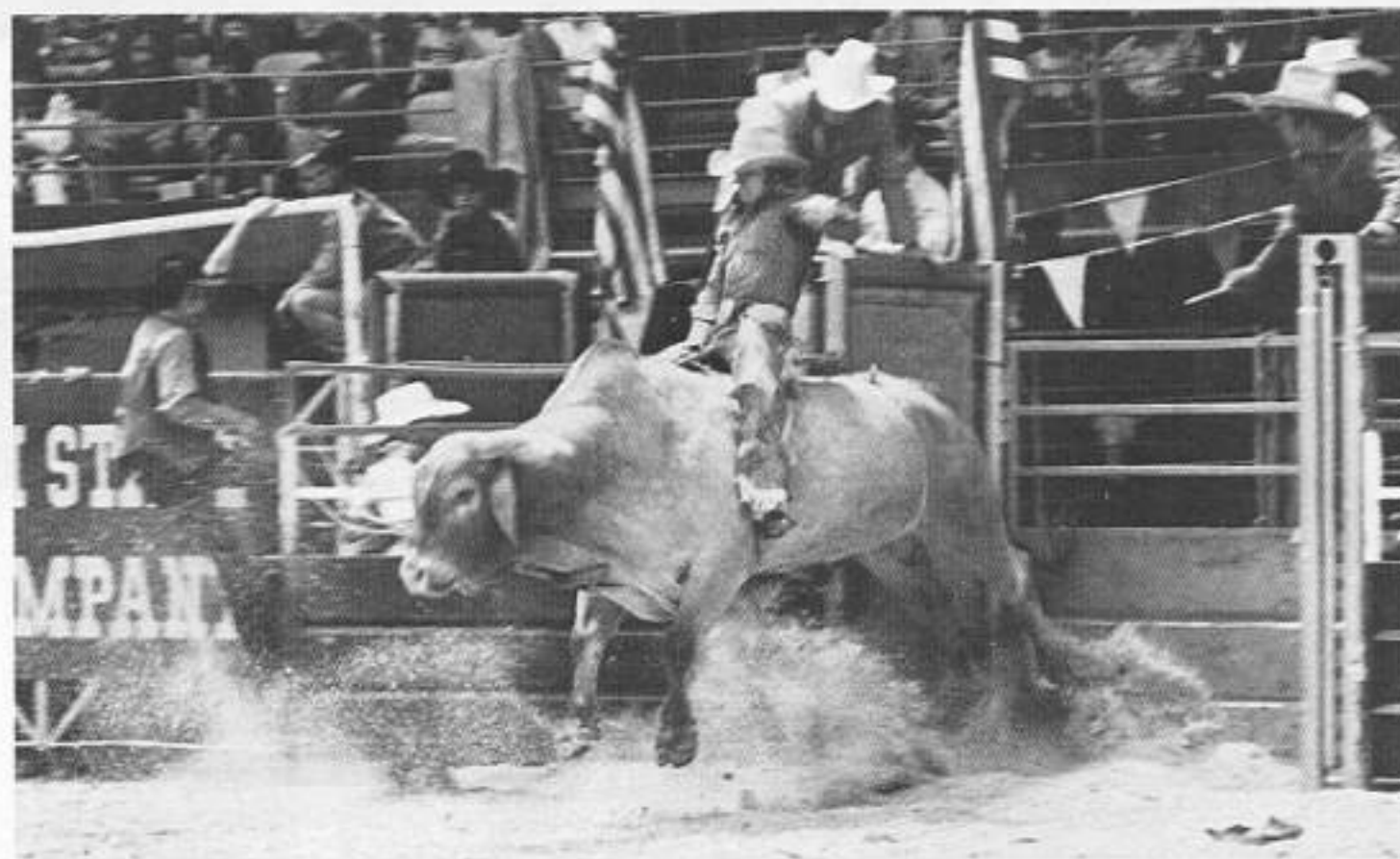
Marvin Paul Shoulders, who hails from Henrietta, Oklahoma, is the Avis money-winning Brahma bull-riding champion. "I was born and raised on a ranch. My father is a rodeo stock contractor. I ride bulls better than broncs. Tonight I scored 82 which is first place so far. If nobody beats me tomorrow, I'll take home \$1,200. Then I move on to Las Vegas and the Elks' Helldorado. At the end of the year, the top 15 riders compete in the national finals. This is the world series of rodeo. I qualified in the yearly overall standings in 1972 and 1973 and got to go to them. I won the Brahma bull-riding event with a score of 93, the highest marking ever given there. As it turned out, it was on my dad's bull, Mighty Mouse. We raised him but you'd never know it from the way he bucked when I rode him. Some bulls are just born buckers. They love to buck. Underneath, they're pure mean. We got 200 head of ranch cattle at our spread in Henrietta. For my score of 93 I won \$4,960."

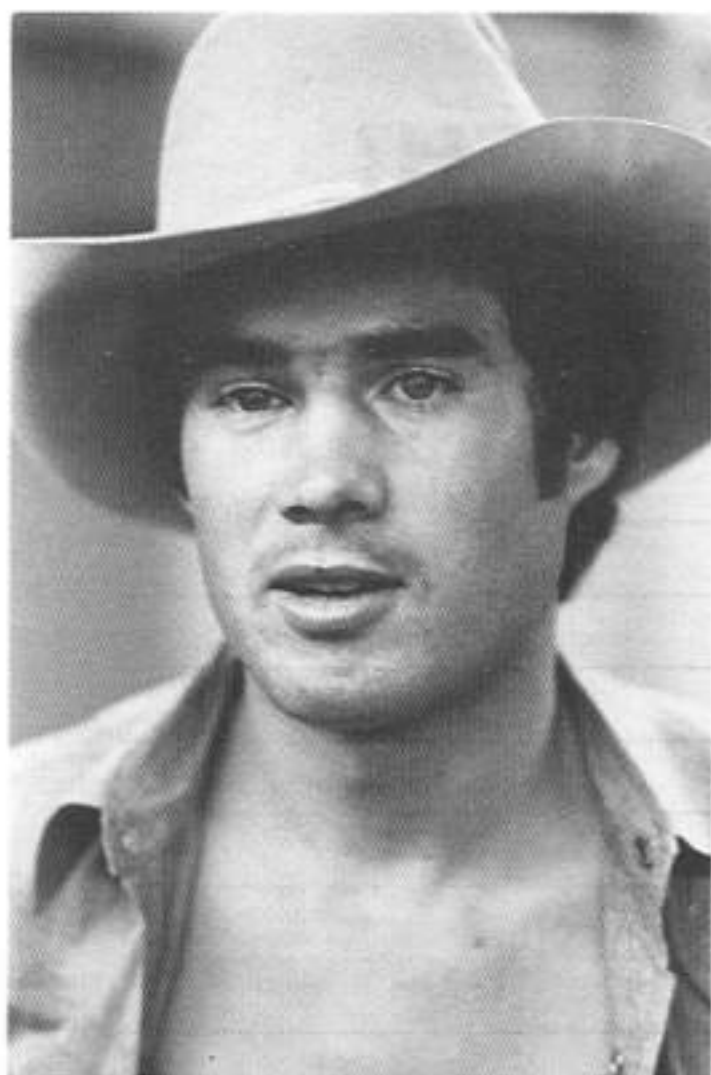
"How long does a good bucking Brahma buck?"

"About eight years."

"What's your ambition?"

"I want to be world's champion. Right now I'm sitting second and I want to be first. Rodeoin's a gamble and I reckon I'll keep on takin' it as long as I got the strength in me."





"Are the bucking bulls abused in the ring?"

"No. I really think they're treated as humanely as it is possible to handle them. Now you take a cow breeding bull. He lives eight or nine years. The life-span of a bucking bull is much longer. Maybe 12 to 14 years. The cruelty is in separating the bucking bulls from the cows."

I watched Jack get on a ferocious Brahma. He hooked his legs close under its belly, then pulled the cinch strap taut. He gave the signal, held his cowboy hat high above his head. The gate swung open, the crowd went wild and he let 'er buck! After eight seconds, he attempted to dismount, miscalculated and fell under the bull. The crowd screamed and my throat went dry as the animal stepped on his chest. As it lowered its horns and began to paw the

ground, Jack rolled away in the dust and limped off. In the dressing room backstage, he bared his shirt for Hy Chase, my cameraman, and smiled as he gritted his teeth. An ugly red splotch greeted our gaze. To my way of thinking, a rodeo doctor ought to be mandatory. If the injured cowboy doesn't immediately request an ambulance (which he pays for out of his own pocket), serious problems are likely to develop later. But Jack Kelly just grinned. For Marlboro Country is in his blood. And it's all in a night's work for the rodeo cowboy. Often he loses his entry fee. And as I duly noted, he can be seriously injured as well. But he goes on. It's part of his life. It's what he wants to do. And it's part of our great American heritage. After all, it's the Marvin Paul Shoulders of this world that keep us all tryin' just a little bit harder.

Jack Kelly, who hails from Deer Lodge, Montana, also went to college. "My dad's a rancher and we've got 250 head of cows back in Montana. When I was ten or twelve I was riding 4-H rodeos. In the summer of '65 I bought a permit for \$35 which allowed me to ride certain rodeos. In '67 I joined RCA after earning \$1,000 which takes you out of the amateur category. I went to Montana State College in Bozeman for five years and got a degree in animal science. I was a pre-vet for two years and went for my B.S. the fifth year. My first year at the Texas Winter Rodeos I won \$6,000."

"Why do you like rodeo?"

"The glory. I do it for the competition with my friends. It's entertaining for the crowd. I want my fellow cowboys to respect me as a bull rider. Better than 50 per cent have some college education now due to the fact that there are so many college rodeo teams and they offer scholarships."

"Ever been injured?"

"I was stepped on by a bull three months ago and was out of commission for three months. It took me three or four years to develop my technique in riding a bull."

"What are the best bucking bulls?"

"The Charolais. They're cross-bred and they've got black eyes set in white faces. But after nine years, they get too heavy. Their legs go and they quit bucking. Then they're slaughtered."



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unity

are tired of being ignored, excluded, slandered and persecuted. In relating to those in the gay community who differ radically from ourselves in political goals and strategies as well as lifestyles and notions of what is right and wrong, we should learn the old lesson that if you're going a short piece down the road with someone, though your paths will diverge later, walk in comradeship as far as you're going together. Perhaps that's the best we can do politically, at present. I think we can do more in a social/spiritual sense, by making our togetherness incorporate and transcend our differences, so that we remain brothers/sisters even while we march along different paths.

We have a sort of minimal agreement on broad social issues affecting us: we wish to be able to live our lives without undue social interference and be at least reasonably free of the sting of public disapproval. Sounds good, as far as it goes but when we start getting down to the fine points agreement vanishes and is too often replaced by cold fury. Many cannot see how any Gay could possibly disagree with the consenting-adults-in-private formula that is often our United Front stance on law reform. But try explaining its advantages to a virile gay male who is under the proposed age of consent. Or to a man or woman who believes fervently as the Greeks did that the highest spiritual gain in education is achieved with a full and frankly erotic relationship between teacher and pupil. Try explaining the morality of always-taking-your-tricks-home to real street people—or to timid, middle-aged gentlemen whose mother is always at home in the tiny apartment—or to revolutionaries who fervently believe that the whole bourgeois notion that the-only-proper-place-for-sex-is-in-the-privacy-of-your-bedroom is one of those stultifying rules that *needs* to be destroyed, or to romantic lovers, gay or otherwise, who cannot resist the effect of a sunset over a hillside. . . .

We come fairly close to getting together in our Christopher Street parades, but every year, the members of the organizing committees are nearly torn apart by dissension over whether the chief and only purpose of such pa-

rades is to be an exercise in public relations, designed to convince the general public that we are all button-down, respectable types, determined to win our rights but not strident or really pushy; or an exercise in gay freedom and joy, where we can cavort or bellow out to the world our liberation; or whether we are playing the sacred role of clowns in all times past, entertaining the urbane and shocking the complacent, upsetting all rigid ideas about propriety, taste and sex roles; or whether we are mounting some sort of ultra-serious power display, like the rumbling of tanks and troops before Lenin's tomb in Moscow's deadly parades.

The best we can do—short of splitting up and putting on two or three separate events during Gay Pride Week (not a bad idea, I think, since the spirit of a march and that of a Mardi Gras-type promenade don't really mix well, and each has its separate value) is for each group joining in one big parade to do its best to project *its own message* and for the parade as a whole, year after year, to carry some such theme as "unity in diversity."



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Radicals and Conservatives

Our biggest division lies squarely on the question of what we do about a society which has oppressed us for centuries. Conservative Gays have a basic faith in the structures of the present society, or at least a healthy fear of upsetting those structures too completely. They believe that Gays have a proper claim, within the fundamental principles on which American government is based, to justice, and if we can present our message convincingly to the people, we will get that justice, and will have no further cause for dissatisfaction as a group.

This view often carries the strategic corollary that we should not excessively antagonize society while making our pitch, lest we give ammunition to bigots and scare off potential allies.

Radicals, with infinite variations, believe that the structures of our society were *intended* for social oppression and legalized theft, that bourgeois justice is a sham, that any political gains we make within the system are a result of sellout and at the expense of some other minority. They believe that most people in our society are hoodwinked and oppressed, and that the only solution for Gays, workers, women, farmers, Blacks or youth is to unite and replace the rotten system with true democracy which does not use parliamentary subterfuges to give the real power to special interests.

Without going into criticism here of either philosophy, I would note that many of our most effective gay activists are found at both extremes (with a few like myself uncomfortably astraddle) and I don't see how to get some of these individuals to run in tandem when they aren't even on the same race track.

Some will take this as terribly pessimistic—saying that there just isn't much chance of getting people with opposing philosophies to cooperate on a daily basis on strategy and tactics. I don't think the question of pessimism or optimism enters at this point. Just don't try to force persons who are playing by different rules and for different goals into the same game.

I find no difficulty in having a sense of fellowship with persons who do not advocate the same approach I do to the problems of Gays in contemporary society. Here at least I take a *laissez-faire* approach: let each group follow its own plan, and see which gets the job done, with a fervent hope that most of the bombardment will be against the common enemy rather than against other Gays.

It is obvious that since I have pointed out the great disagreements among Gays, I am aware that many will reject my analysis, particularly the notion that we must to some degree accept our differences. That is unthinkable to many, who can only approach differences with a steamroller. And I don't know whether the conservatives or the radicals are the most blind, the most intolerant when at last it gets through their thick skulls that someone (who is not apparently stupid, or in the pay of the enemy) actually disagrees with them on fundamentals.

And this applies as much to differences in lifestyles as to differences in philosophy. While a few drag queens or a few leather types can work comfortably in more conformist groups, and a few gay women can be comfortable in

groups dominated by gay men, most find it impossible to "get their heads together" except in the company of Gays of their particular interests.

We have to recognize the limits of "unity." Though there are bonds that draw all Gays together, there are certain things that can best be shared with those who in fact share them. A transvestite, even if his sexual interests are professedly homosexual, is likely to feel on the defensive in most gay groups, just as will men who have an interest, however honorable, in teenagers, or those who have begun, perhaps uncertainly, to participate in innocent S/M games. Each of these is subject to the same sort of prejudice and angry condemnation from other Gays which Gays as a class get from heterosexuals. Therefore each of these groups has a need for special organizations, just as gay women do, where they can let their hair down, discussing their experiences with those who have moved along the same line. And that is just on the therapeutic level. If political programs come out of these groups, they are rather certain to be programs which many more general gay organizations will *not* be able to support with comfort.

But sometimes we have those rare

interorganizational conventions (like the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations back between 1966 and 1970) where we meet with the best intentions to all-get-together and get-things-moving. And into these sessions comes a new organization or caucus which introduces a sheaf of resolutions on topics which most of the delegates have rarely thought about, and suddenly, in a moment of high drama, we find fast votes being steam-rolled through (as in one Sacramento conference in October 1972) calling for the abolition of the nuclear family, the school system, and God knows what not!

Such votes often pass, and a bizarre press release is issued, but they not only do not represent the thinking of the gay community at large, they barely represent the thinking of the delegates who were surprised into voting on them.

There is much we can unite to do, and much that we can do without the often cumbersome mechanics of uniting. Many projects work best on an ad hoc basis, i.e., let those groups of persons favoring a specific action come together to plan and carry out the work. Most community services can be set up without calling assorted representatives together to debate the whys and wherefores. They only require that a few qualified persons find the means to get the job done, and do it. This has generally worked well in Los Angeles, except when those opposing a project have waded in as spoilers instead of sticking to their own good work.

But the big unity we have to nurture is not instrumental or pragmatic, not designed to stage a particular affair or change a particular law. It is the unity of building that worldwide fellowship, which hopefully can bridge the differences between drag and butch, radical and conservative, religious and humanist. That unity I can be very optimistic about, because it seems to be growing at a beautiful rate.

One last small point. For those who are lamenting the fact that the gay movement is not unified: Don't wait for someone else to do the job. It's your responsibility too. Stop bitching and do something. But when you do, be humble about it. Don't expect everybody else to drop their convictions and commitments and do things your way. After all, they won't do that, even for *me*.



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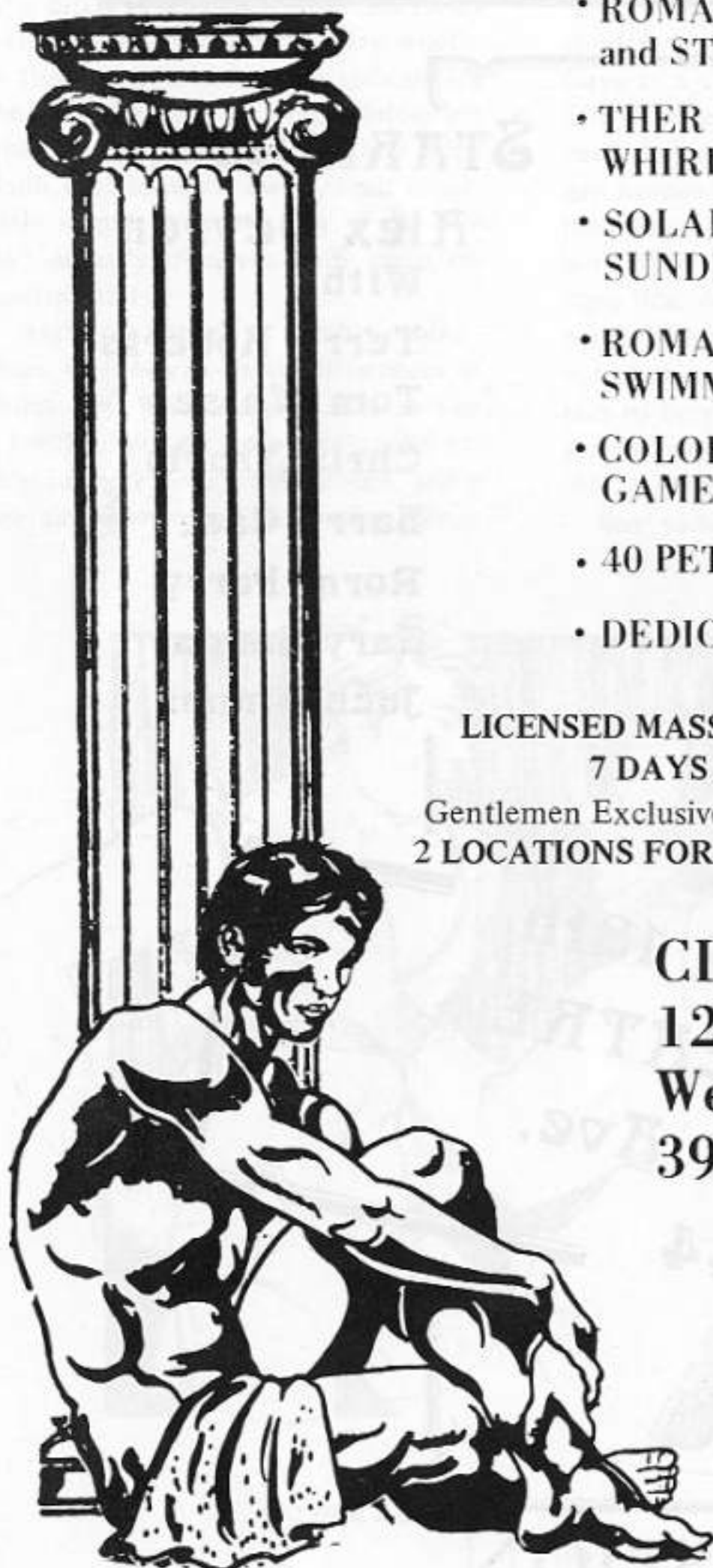
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able to listen to the album and like it. . . . I threw some real temper tantrums in the studio about some things that are *not* on the album. They were just dreadful. But essentially I like the album. Which is unusual because I've had nightmares about it. I was horrified when I first heard the tapes of my voice. I didn't like the way I sounded. I managed to get over that by listening to myself a lot and learning to moderate certain sounds.

"The arranger was a really, really good man. And the guitarist—Vinny Fuccella—I'd worked with him before the album. I can just describe a mood to him, or an environment, or a situation, and he'll play it for me. And I can talk to Chris Dedrick in pretty much the same way. In 'Christopher's Blues' I told them what I wanted. The sense of whips cracking, bugaboos, people coming at you out of the night. And they did it. It's wonderful to be able to create with people like that. Most people aren't so lucky. They aren't happy with their first album. But I like it. I can listen without cringing and play it for my friends."

The subject of Michael Cohen produced an immediate and enthusiastic response from Steven.

"My managers don't like me to talk about him. But I don't care. I love his album. And I respect Michael incredibly. He's a fantastic poet, and a superb melodist, and his politics are pretty good, too. He also plays exquisite piano, but that's drowned out in lots of cuts on the album. We really got acquainted as a result of doing a concert together, with Exuma. It was a good experience. He wasn't too happy with himself, and I wasn't with myself. But it was good toughing it out together."

And what's next on Steven's agenda?

"I'd like to leave New York. Maybe that's a cop-out. But New York has such a rush-type gay scene. All rapid turnover and no real relationship. It brings out the really bad, cynical side of me. . . . I've been other places where I don't think it's as intense as it is in New York.

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And I'd like to meet new people. I feel like I've fallen into a rut. I'd like to encounter new people, new ideas. And I'd like to *talk* a little more. I spend very little time talking. . . . I don't talk that much.

"And I'd like to find a good teacher and learn how to play piano. 'Caravans Tonight' was written on the piano in California. I brought it back to New York and played it for Bobby and Lanny [managers Bobby Flax and Lanny Lambert] and their reaction was, 'Yech!' I had to fix it up for guitar before they could even *hear* it. But I'd like to compose on the piano. It's a much fuller instrument."

And how does he feel about his first taste of success, and his brushes with the music industry?

"I'm beginning to realize how much I enjoy it. It's terribly counter-revolutionary to enjoy being in a business. But the way I was raised, I never experienced a lot of those things. I'm really enjoying it. Not having to work at a 9 to 5 job. I don't know if it's healthy, but I enjoy it. And I really like feeling a response from people I've reached. I know how



much it would have meant to me, if there'd been somebody who was gay around to listen to when I was growing up. . . . I think I'd have come out sooner. I'd have been happier. And I'd have avoided hurting a lot of women."

Steven may not be certain if he's an artist. But after meeting him, I wasn't the least bit uncertain about it. The viv-

idness of his response to everything that happens, and his uncanny knack for translating his experience into extraordinarily direct images give him a rare emotional power. He may be, as he says, naive. But in his writing there is an instinctive taste and sophistication that seldom fails him. In any case, he's an original, and a talent to cherish.

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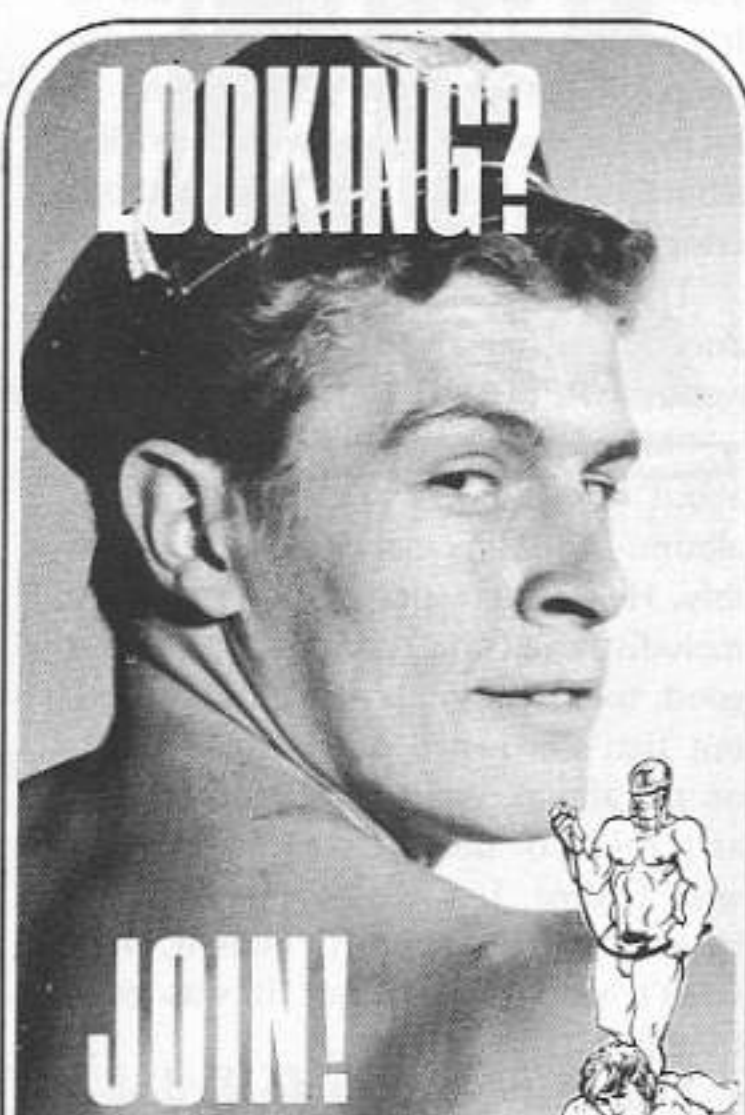
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kin. As before, the play had its violent partisans and detractors.

After nearly a year of delays, and negotiations with two different sets of producers, the play opened on Broadway. And that was really a devastating experience. As Terrence later described it, "Two of them [the critics] went so far as to demand that I be electrocuted on that fence in the second act. The others contented themselves with rock throwing and some name calling. People asked me how I felt. I told them. Others treated me as if my entire family had been exterminated by one grisly blow of fate. I accepted their condolences. My younger brother, Peter, who had come from Texas fully expecting to see his big brother carried through the streets of New York in Roman style, said unflinchingly, 'Well, there's no place to go but up.' He was right, too."

Nevertheless, the impact of that failure turned him off writing for the theatre for more than a year.

"I was very much in debt, so I took a job editing an alumni magazine at Columbia for about a year."

Meanwhile, plans were afoot for a Broadway musical version of John Steinbeck's novel, *East of Eden*. As a result of his previous connection with the Steinbeck family, Terrence was asked to write the book for the show, which was called *Here's Where I Belong*. But it was not where Terrence belonged. By the time the show tried out in Philadelphia, he saw that it was hopeless, and severed his relations with it. His name was removed from the show before its opening (and closing) night.

Then, at last, his luck began to change. He won a Guggenheim Grant that gave him the financial independence to go back to writing seriously. *Sweet Eros/Witness, Tour* (as part of a show called *Collision Course*) and *Noon* (the middle section of *Morning, Noon and Night*) were written shortly thereafter. "By then I think I really wanted to be a playwright ... while I had the Guggenheim, I wrote *Next*. And that's when I started making money. It's a modest income, but I'm happy I can support myself as a writer. It's that simple. I think I'm very lucky."

Now, with the success of *Next* and *Bad Habits* under his belt, Terrence lives

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in a small cheery apartment in New York City's Greenwich Village, which he shares with a cairn terrier named Charles. Charles, however, was absent for our interview, having hogged the spotlight when a reporter for the *New York Post* came to call. Of the apartment, Terrence says, "It's not really my style. It used to be Jimmy Coco's. He

gave it to me as a present after *Next*. But it was a delight to be able to just move in and not have to worry about renovating. And it's a tremendous improvement over some of my past apartments. There was one place that had only DC current. What a thing to do to a person! For three years I couldn't listen to music because I couldn't play the phonograph. Or even use the vacuum cleaner or the TV set. I used to call people up and say, 'Can I see the news at your house?'"

I remembered stories about the off-Broadway production of *Morning, Noon, and Night*—a package of three one-act plays by Israel Horowitz, Terry and Leonard Melfi, respectively, which had been directed by Ted Mann of the Circle in the Square. Rumor had it that Horowitz had become so agitated over rewrites that he took a poke at the director and was subsequently barred from rehearsals. And I'd also heard that Terrence had completely rewritten the *Noon* section just before opening. I asked for his account of the proceedings.

"I was hardly ever at rehearsals because I was involved with the production of *Sweet Eros* and *Witness* at the same time. But I finally got to see a matinee just before the opening. And I took my friends, Jimmy Coco and Bobby Drivas with me."

(Coco and Drivas are close professional associates as well as friends. Coco appeared in both *Witness* and *Next*, and Drivas played leading roles in *And*



Terrence McNally chats with author-director Elaine May at the opening of *Adaptation-Next* at the Los Angeles Music Center (photo by Rothschild).

Things That Go Bump in the Night, *Sweet Eros*, and the title role in the more recent *Where Has Tommy Flowers Gone?*, in addition to directing the current Broadway production of *Bad Habits*.)

"Originally I'd had the homosexual character throw himself out the window at the end. But when I saw it, it was very apparent to me that the ending wasn't working as I'd intended. At first I wanted to blame the actors. But Jimmy and Bobby didn't agree. They reminded me of *The Odd Couple*, where Felix is always saying, 'I'm going to jump out the window!' But if he actually did jump, you'd hate Neil Simon. Fortunately, I had the sense to listen to my friends, and wasn't stubborn. I rewrote the scene that night—and it went in the following night, just in time for



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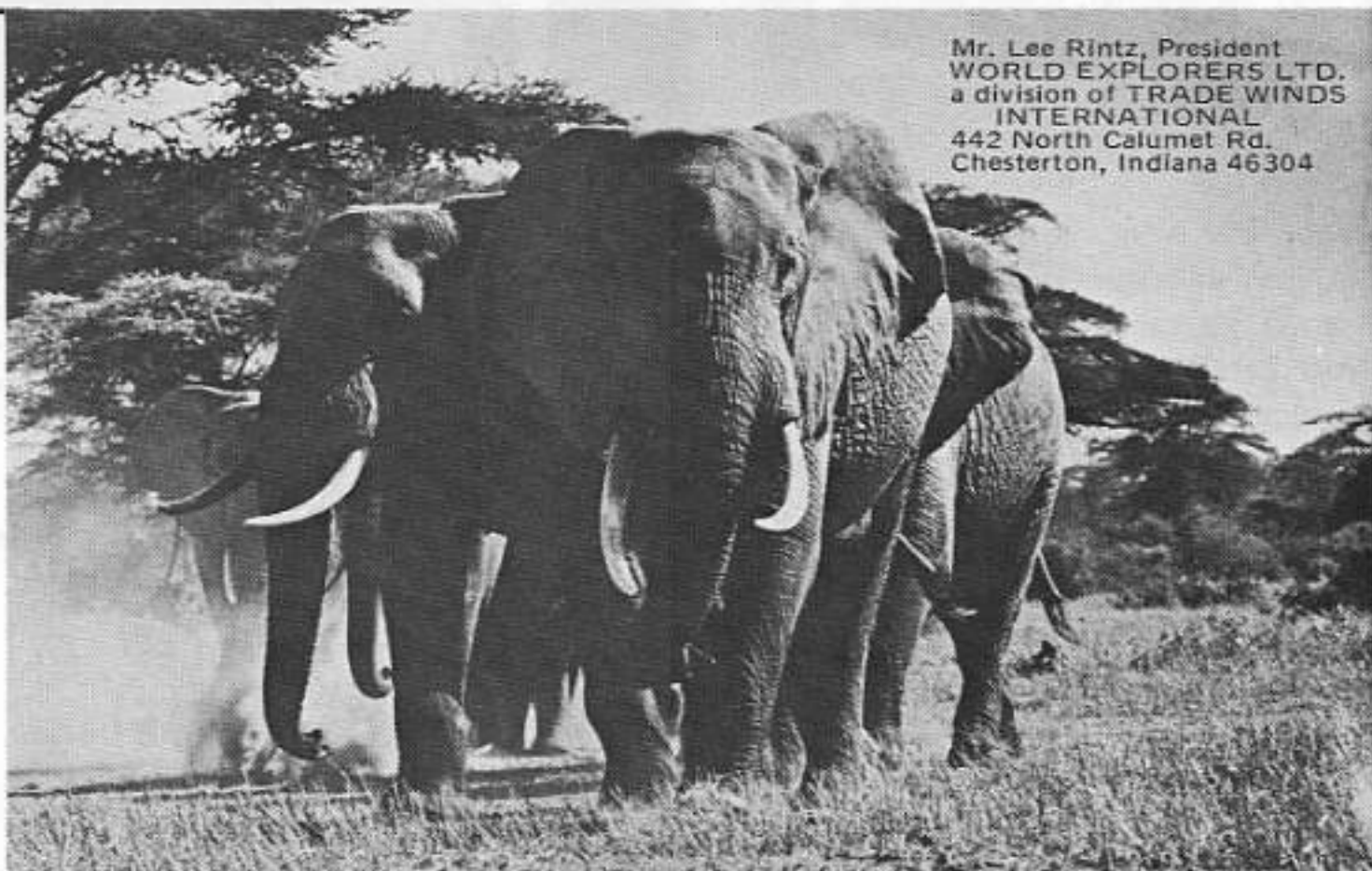
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the opening. When Clive Barnes saw it, the actors had bits and pieces of the script taped all over the set because there hadn't been time enough to learn the new lines. Charlotte Rae's phone conversation at the end was plastered to the top of the table so she could read it. . . . If you have bright friends, be willing to listen to them. If I've improved at all as the result of my experience, it's that I've learned how to work with other people in the theatre."

In talking with Terrence, and in hearing stories from others, the one thing that always seemed most remarkable about him is his equanimity. In a profession full of flamboyant tempers and temperaments who veer toward hysteria with every crisis, he seems downright placid.

"Well, you sort of have to be, if theatre is what you want. No one's making anyone work in the theatre. You can quit anytime you want to. . . . I've had a lot of plays that were happy experiences. And certainly I've never had one bad enough to make me want to stop writing plays. There's been only one person I've met in the theatre I truly didn't like. And after all, a play is a play. It's not the end of the world to have a play produced. Every day something new happens. And as with everything else, a play will either work out or it won't."

(One actor who has worked with him says that Terrence isn't serene at all. That inside his placid exterior, he's positively seething. And there may be something in it. After all, the passions and the violence in his plays have to come from somewhere!)

The interview was drawing to a close. The mother of an actress in the Broadway **Bad Habits** had just suffered a heart attack, so an understudy was going in. Another actor was doing a television job. Director Robert Drivas was out of town, so it was up to Terrence to get to the theatre to keep an eye on the replacements.

As we parted, and headed in our separate directions, I remembered Mary Mercier's comment, "Terrence will outlast us all!" And she wasn't far wrong. When that first performance of *There Is Something Out There* occurred in 1962, he was the fresh-faced kid, the novice, the unknown among the name writers of the Studio. And the names of that time—Jack Gelber, Jack Richardson, Edward Albee, William Archibald, Arthur Kopit—where are they now? One dead, some apparently no longer writing, none having escaped a certain eclipse of their literary reputations. And Terrence is just now really coming into his own!

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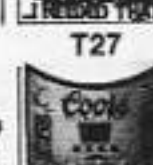
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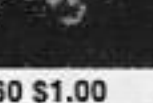
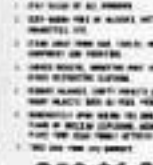


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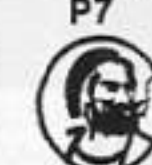
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hosanna



Offstage, the two Richards, Monette (left) and Donat, outside a Toronto restaurant (photo by E. Donnell Stoneman).

tuous upheaval as 180 people rise to feet applauding as the two actors, dressed in identical black terrycloth robes, take numerous curtain calls, smiling now, totally removed from the roles that have occupied them so completely for the past two hours.

Richard Monette and Richard Donat are, to begin with, superbly cast as Claude and Raymond. With a teenage *Hamlet* to his credit, Monette has appeared with the Canadian Shakespeare Festival at Stratford, and, in another area closer perhaps to *Hosanna*, in the English versions of *Oh, Calcutta!* and Tom Eyan's *The Dirtiest Show in Town*.

Nothing, however, could prepare the viewer for his performance as Hosanna. It is an incredible *tour de force* of acting skill which succeeds brilliantly in realizing the full potential of the role. With a face made beautiful as Cleopatra, and a tongue capable of cutting to the bone, Monette's projection of the character is so complete that we eagerly accept him on his own terms. It is a stunning, unforgettable performance.

In a less flashy and, in a sense, less demanding role, Richard Donat, nephew to Robert and brother to Peter, gives sturdy support to his end of the evening. Physically stronger, he reveals a touching vulnerability which, in the final moments of the play, underscores the playwright's message with sensitive understatement.

Half an hour after the performance, Monette and Donat are seated in a quiet neighborhood restaurant, wolfishly attacking a huge steak, pausing between mouthfuls to discuss the play and their enthusiasm for the roles that the play-

wright created. It's the first such part for each of them, though Monette, with his previous experience in what he calls "sex plays" (referring to *Oh, Calcutta!*) comes closer.

"I did *Calcutta* for much the same reason I did *Hosanna*," Monette explains. "It's very hard to make good art out of pornography because pornography by definition is on one level, a fantasy level. If you're masturbating happily with a father and daughter making it and you think, Oh, my God! This girl is going to grow up sick! Well, you lose your erection and that's it. It's a very difficult thing to make artistic and that's why the dance in *Calcutta* worked. But the rest is abstract and that's why you end up with burlesque. I think it was a brave and interesting thing to do and it was important in England at the time to challenge the censorship laws. It's still running after four years. I could still be in it!"

With practically no previous exposure to the world of transvestism, the two actors did a bit of homework by taking in a short tour of several drag shows in Montreal. For Donat especially, it was a memorable experience.

"Tremblay puts the question to you directly in the play, who are you?" he says. "I remember the clubs we went to, seeing those people. I don't know, I got confused. Because you react to this person as a woman and it's really amazing. It showed me how I really react to women which is purely external. I think it has something to do with the whole North American idea of masculinity, the John Wayne syndrome. Now, there's a closer getting together."

Monette makes no comment about his Montreal trip but gives a more personal explanation why he jumped at the chance to play *Hosanna*.

"I was hungry to do it," he says. "I read the script and I smelled blood. I was at a low ebb psychologically, you know, actors get depressed every other minute. It's an outrageous role, especially for Canada, and the aggressiveness in going out and doing it was appealing. So, I just dove in!"

What kind of audiences has *Hosanna* played to? Was tonight's enthusiastic response typical of the run?

"Sometimes we get very straight audiences," Monette says, "and then I enjoy the whole thing—it's almost like a

bullfight—of getting them to like this character without making it sympathetic. Of having them extend their understanding so at the end they say what the play says. I like the fact that the play has a happy ending. I love it! It's redemptive!"

The playwright's choice of sex as a metaphor is readily apparent but why, I wondered, did he choose deviant sex? Monette answers without hesitation.

"Because it's more exciting. It's more interesting... voyeuristic."

"And theatrical," Donat adds. "The use of opposites and yet the same—two men."

"The universal statement is two people getting together and being what they are. The layers of costume that come off until we're finally naked."

After *Calcutta!* and *Hosanna*, what other outrageous role beckons to Monette?

"I would like to play Cleopatra in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*."

Hosanna attracted an unusual amount of attention during its limited run in Toronto. The usually staid Canadian critics flipped figurative cartwheels of delight over the "shimmering produc-

tion." The critic for the *Toronto Star*, for example, concluded his accolade with the statement that "... this play, this production, these actors make theatregoing a privilege."


Such a tumult of praise was bound to be heard in New York and, sure enough, a horde of various producers, agents and assorted bandwagon hitchhikers from Broadway soon began to beat a path to the Tarragon's door. Contracts were duly signed and the entire production is now scheduled to travel south of the border and open in New York in mid-October.



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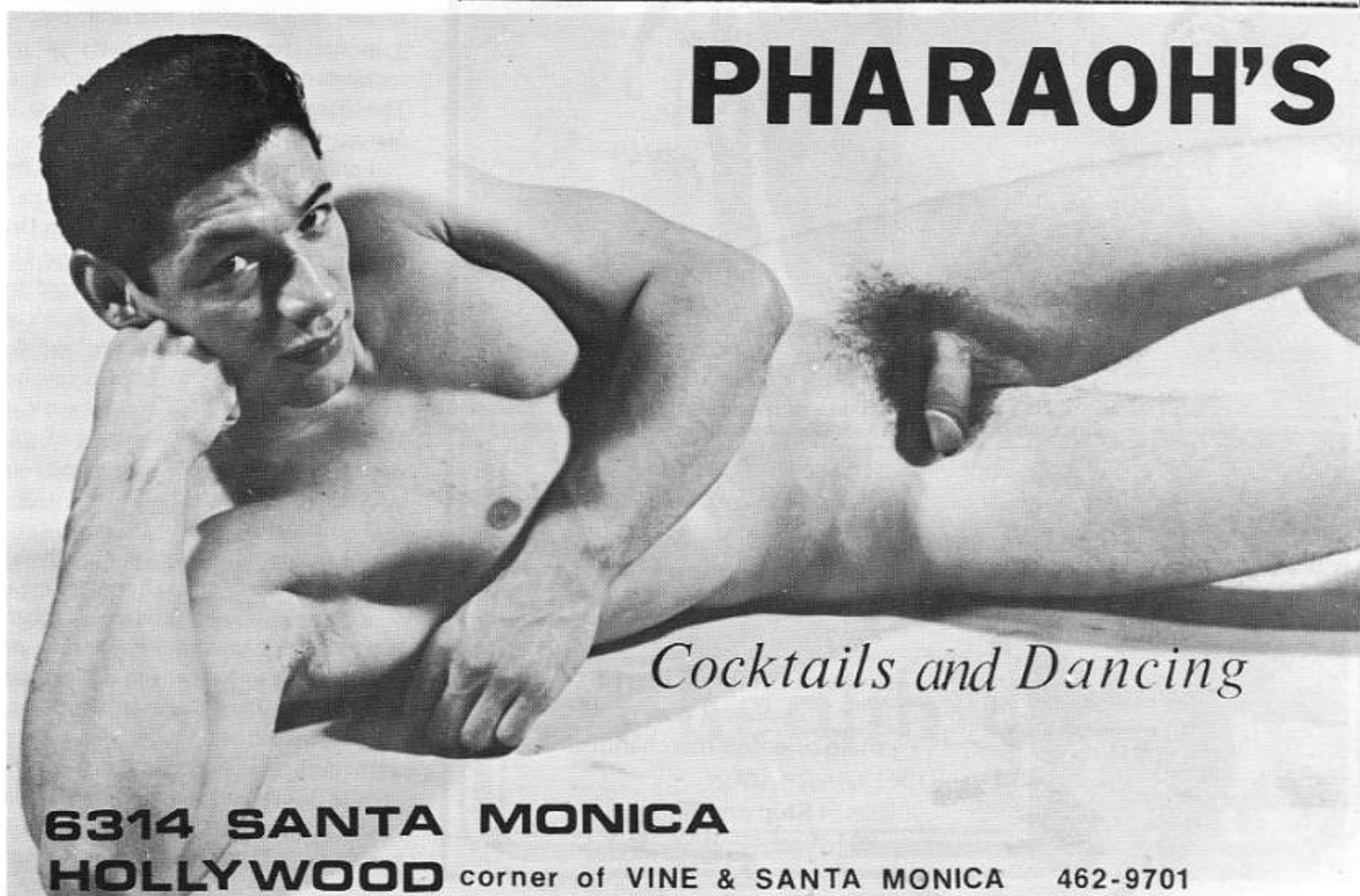
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actress, she has stature, strength and power. The character of the black woman who holds the family together by sheer strength of her own will and integrity is by now a familiar figure. But Miss Capers is able to suffuse it with enough living reality to make it seem fresh once more. One believes wholeheartedly in this woman who is rigid and old-fashioned in many ways, but who has the human wisdom to know that her son is most in need of her love and forgiveness precisely when he has done something absolutely unforgivable.

Ernestine Jackson, as the daughter-in-law, Ruth, represents a more modern variety of black woman, caught between loyalty to her reckless, ambitious husband and her love and respect for his formidable mother. Like Miss Capers, she is not just a musical comedy girl, but a genuine singing actress.

The rest of the cast are able enough, but it is Miss Capers and Miss Jackson one remembers.

Off-Off Broadway

The gay cooperative TOSOS (This Other Side of Silence) scored a great success with its initial theatrical venture, a musical revue called *Lovers* (which incidentally has now been revived at The Basement, 257 Church Street, in Manhattan).

Following the success of *Lovers*, the group presented a double bill of Lanford Wilson's *The Great Nebula in Orion*, directed by Peter del Valle, and *The Madness of Lady Bright*, directed by Doric Wilson, who explained in a curtain speech that author Wilson had donated the two plays to TOSOS royalty-free, as a contribution to the work of the cooperative, and "a gesture of solidarity with the gay community—of which he is a member."

The Great Nebula in Orion concerns two women, old school chums, who accidentally meet one afternoon many years later. Louise (Kathleen Callahan) is a chic and sophisticated fashion designer who also happens to be a lesbian, and Carrie (Diane Tarleton) is a seemingly conventional suburban matron, with husband and children. But after several drinks and much talk, they discover that in spite of the differences in the shapes of their lives, they have more

in common than either of them suspected. It's a thoughtful, provocative little play, well-served by its cast and director.

The Madness of Lady Bright has been performed many times, with Neil Flanagan, among others, in the role of the desperate queen who tries to stave off madness on an endless summer afternoon. Previous productions have tended to rely heavily on camp and broad comedy to make the play work. Director Wilson felt the play should be done by a real queen, who would be able to concentrate on the solid emotional core of the play rather than the externals. He cast Billy Blackwell in the role—a cabaret performer making his first appearance as an actor. Billy did not have the technical proficiency to make the play scintillate as entertainment, but he did bring to it great emotional conviction. And interestingly enough, the quality that most distinguished his work was a kind of masculine strength: purposeful, honest, and utterly devoid of pretense.

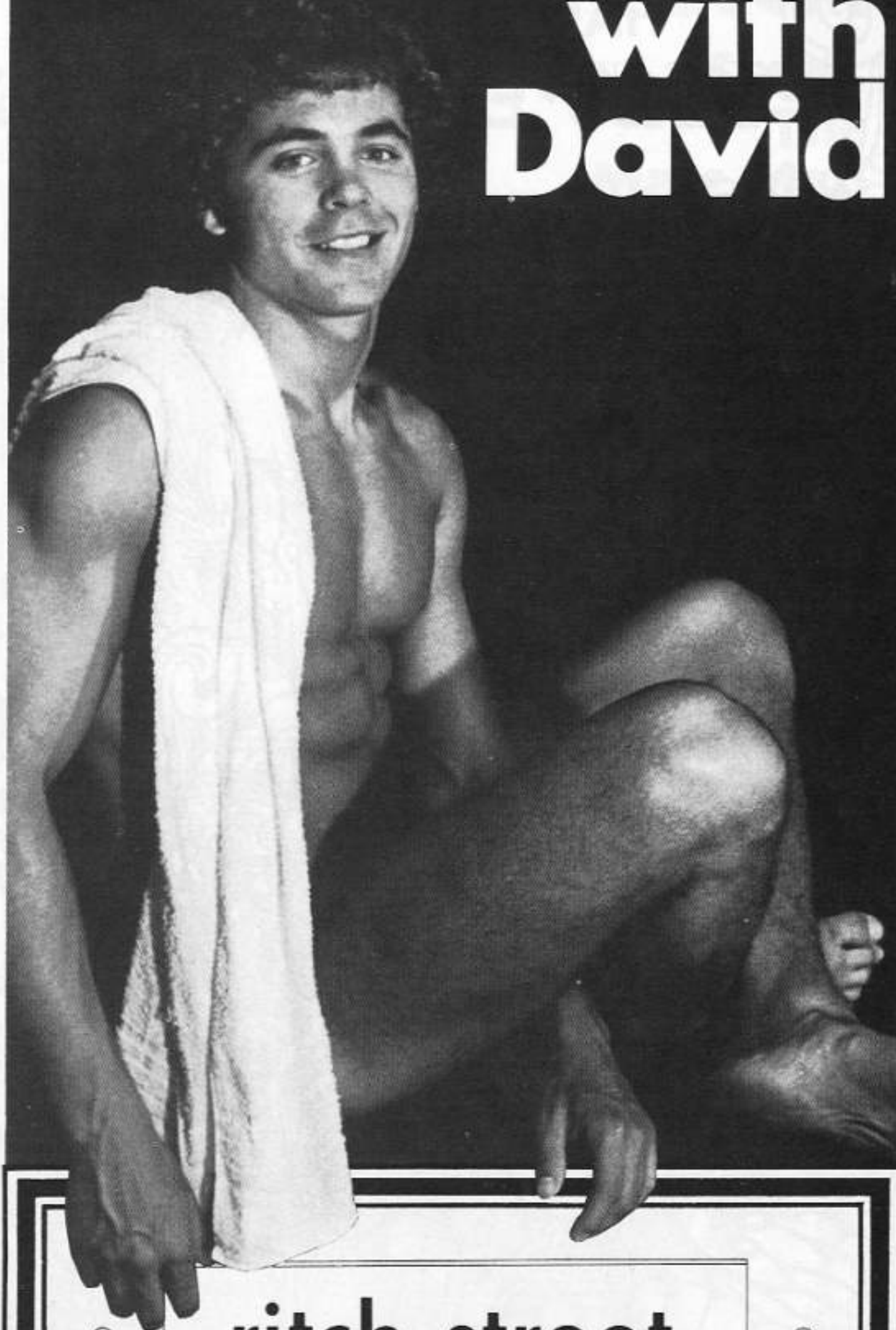
The Chicago Project in New York, currently lodged at the Public Theatre, is a young and vital company with a young and vital director, Don Sanders. It has embarked on an ambitious project to realize as a stage-piece William Burroughs' best-selling novel about drug addiction, *The Naked Lunch*. Mr. Burroughs is working with the group on the undertaking, which will ultimately encompass four evenings.

The first two evenings proved a mixed bag. When the company follows Burroughs' bent toward the poetic and the surreal, it succeeds admirably. When it allows itself to become literal, results are over-verbose and a trifle flat. But they are surprisingly successful in evoking Burroughs' nightmare view of the world as a congregation of parasites, junkies, and cannibals. They also display a knack for highlighting the black comedy in Burroughs' work, which helps immeasurably in making the material stageworthy.

All of the cast are called upon to play in a variety of roles and styles, and they succeed in making the show something of an extravaganza despite strictly limited means.

I'm not sure the Burroughs novel really merits four full evenings, but the company is an exciting one, whatever one may feel about the material.

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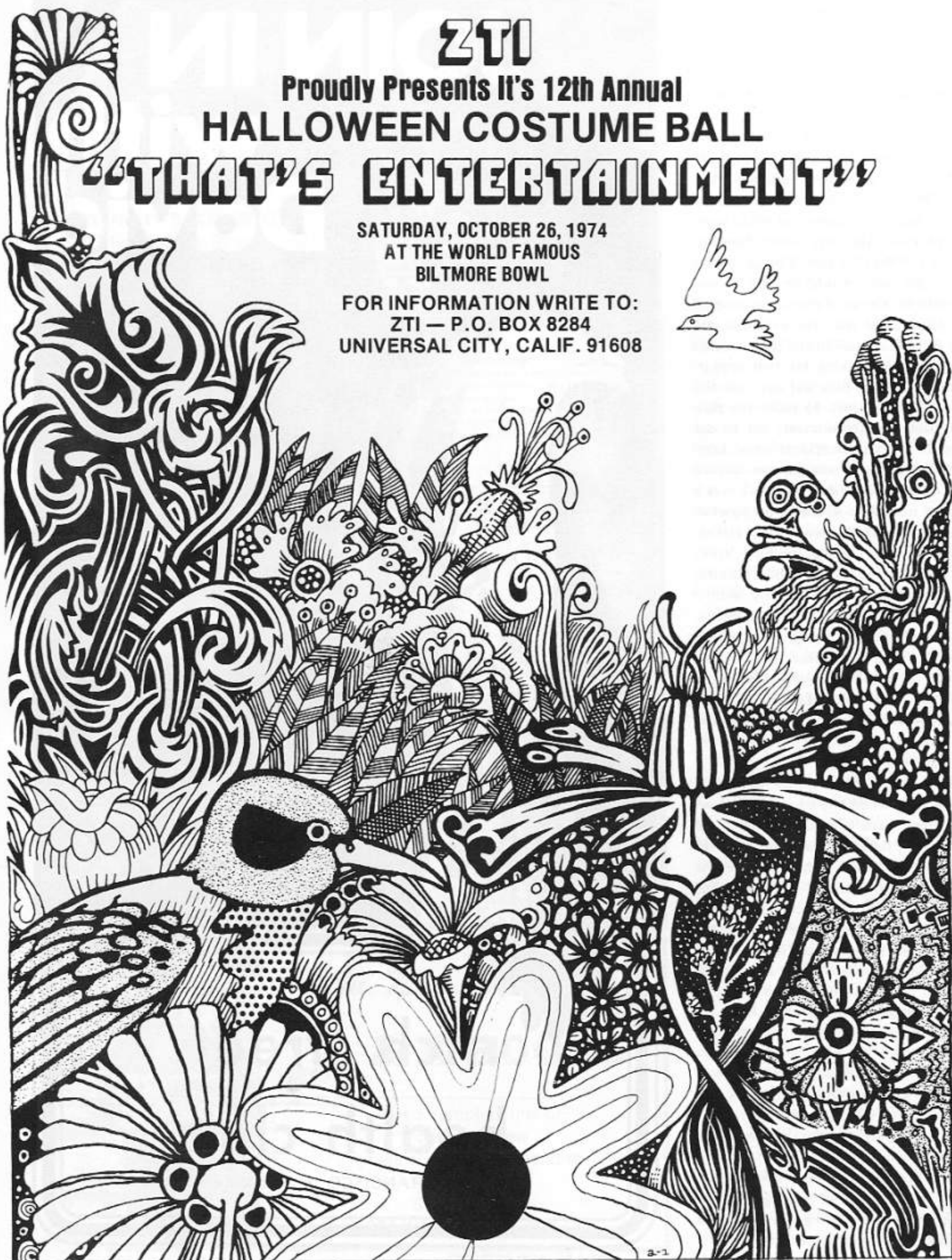
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a careful, slick production on this primarily black label's first venture into the unfamiliar area of the Broadway show. The funny spirit of the show remains totally intact on record. It can be enjoyed onstage—it starts its road tour this fall—and on record with equal ease. The cast is vital and very talented. Ben Vereen, the show's sparkplug, makes you want to bundle him up and rush him home after just one hearing on the LP. Irene Ryan, in her last performance, vibrates right off the record into real life with her near-hit, single record pulled from this cast recording, "No Time at All." It's a lovely epitaph for this beloved actress. Motown is to be congratulated on the crisp, clean sound that neatly socks over all the show's virtues and hides many of its faults.

Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope (Polydor PD-6013) is the longest-running show on the boards. It's very black, capturing all the joys and sorrows of that experience in a fine little musical. Micki Grant composed, wrote the book and even acted in the original production. She really sparks it to life. It's as raw and vibrant as today's headlines. It's unafraid and unapologetic. This recording doesn't miss one nuance. I can't understand why it didn't take off like a shot in the predominately black markets and on black-ruled radio. It may be that the record company was afraid to approach them with a Broadway musical. Once again, there seems to be a relationship problem between the Great White Way and this country's blacks. Sad.

There are several shows on the road, touring and headed for Broadway, which have records available. *Gypsy* isn't so much borrowed as it is lend-leased. We're reimporting it from its run in London with Angela Lansbury repeating her success in the role of Mama Rose. It is an absolutely incredible performance and sure to be a smash hit. Unfortunately, you can't tell that from this tinny, hollow recording. The best we can do is hope for a new one. The same is true of *Rocky Horror*. Here at least we're assured of a new production on record. That has already been done and in the can. It was produced and su-



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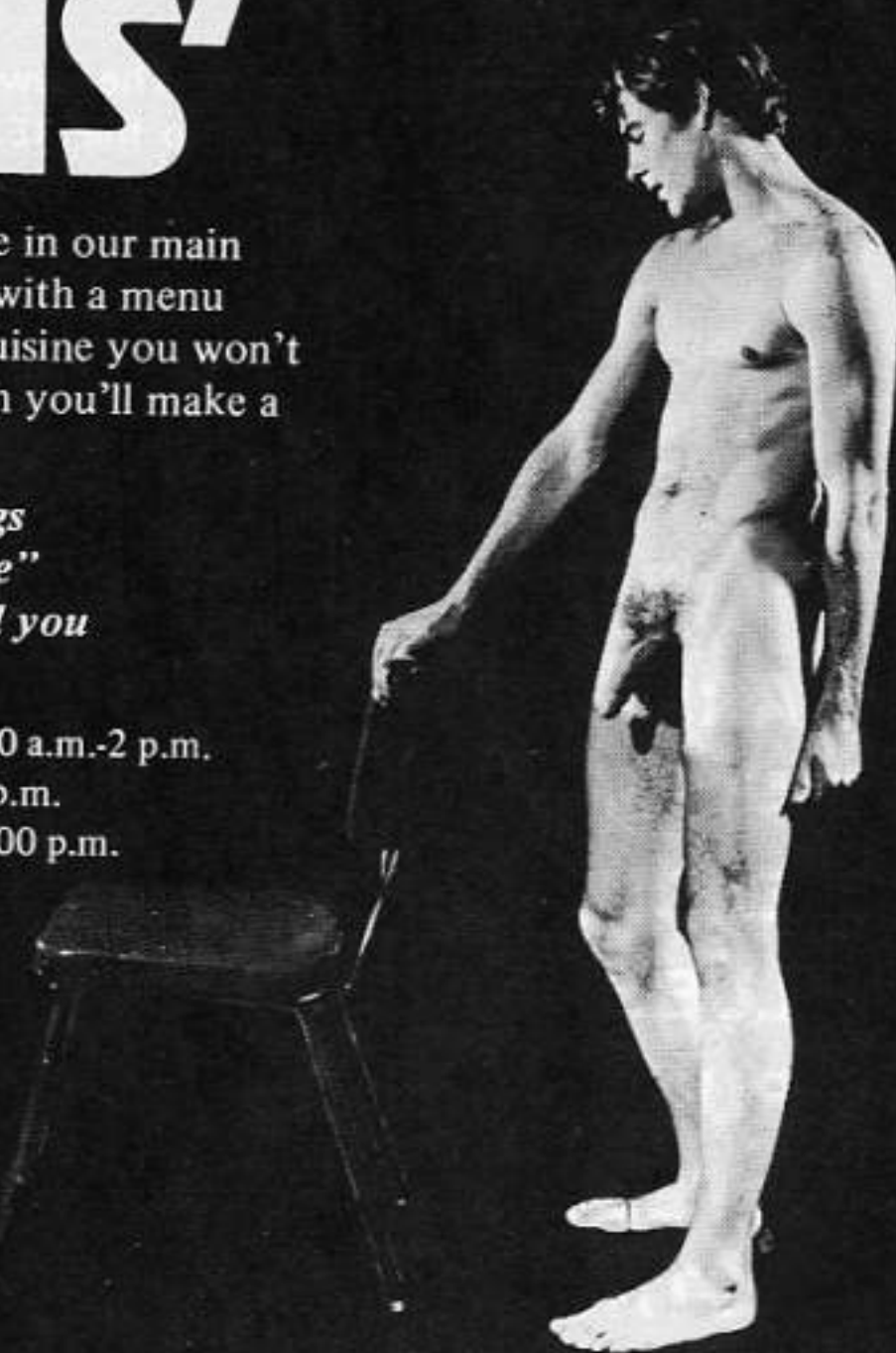
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pervised by one of the top record men in the business, Lou Adler. He also imported and is presenting the show in this country. It will be interesting to see how good the LP is. The facilities on the West Coast are without peer and with Adler at the helm, this should really be a sizzler of a recording. Wait for it, by all means. The English version has next to nothing to do with the sharp, funny little show now long-running in Los Angeles. It takes a perverse recording engineer to mute Tim Curry but on the now available LP that's what happened.

A couple of less than successful items from last season will be joining those on the touring trail this fall. Hitting the road in hopes of recouping a little of their tremendous, unrepaid investments are *Sugar* (United Artists UAS-9905) and *Seesaw* (Buddah BDS-95006-1-oc). Both are apt to find the going pretty rough. *Sugar* is a show set in the Twenties, with music that sounds out of the Fifties, trying to make it in the Seventies. It boils down to an achingly unfunny reworking of one of the most hilarious movies ever made, Billy Wilder's *Some Like It Hot*. The performers constantly play against each other and into the script instead of, correctly, the other way around. Cyril Ritchard almost makes it happen once or twice by just ignoring everything and everyone and doing the same thing he's been doing for years. He's defeated, in the long run, by the totally inept production of both the play and the recording. *Seesaw*, too, sinks but in noble defeat, at least. It is a work of love that went terribly wrong. Cy Coleman, who collaborated on the score, has done an excellent job of transferring it to record. The problem is one of approach. Here is a terse, tough little play that needed a no-nonsense treatment. Instead it got overproduced to an inch beyond its life—the big Broadway treatment, complete with showgirls. William Gibson adapted his own play so he has no one to blame but himself for the gross overexpansion. It's truly 1940 *deja vu*. The action and plot stop cold for the songs. They have no connection with the sharp-edged original. The failure is doubly sad since Michele Lee is a fine musical actress and deserves far better than this. She even made me believe Gittel Mosca could sing!

—HUGH HARRISON

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films

inadvertently treading on some non-criminal's pet cause. If you think about it, LAW is simply standardized vigilantism. LAW eliminates the unknown through agreed-upon rules and this reduces chaos. Individual vigilantes, each applying their own separate standards, can only increase chaos even if, at first, they appear to reduce the crime rate (as is contended in *Death Wish*). You may say that some police are little more than licensed vigilantes, but so long as any semblance of government remains, there is at least a mechanism for tracking down and countering police who abuse their position.

Since the increase of vigilantism is a definite threat these days it would be extremely valuable for a picture to stimulate some in-depth thought about it. But *Death Wish* only succeeds in pleasing people who enjoy a shootout or who savor revenge. Most everyone else seems turned off by its heavy-handed script and doesn't give it any further thought, which is unfortunate.

—DAVID MINTON

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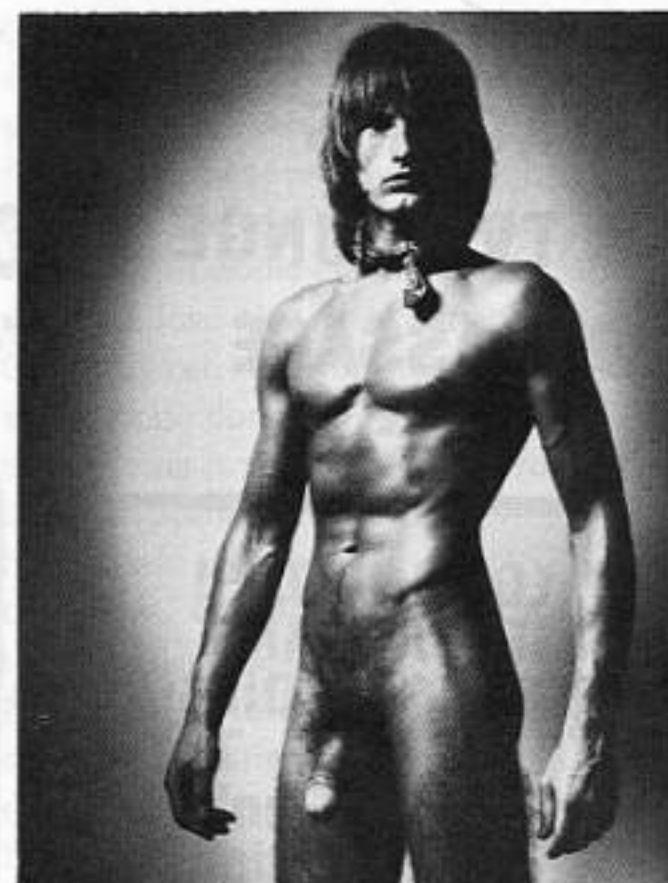
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more film



Peter Burian: Renaissance man as erotic filmmaker. Mr. Burian is writer, director, editor, producer and star of *That Boy*, a poetic exploration of reality and fantasy in the world of sex.

This young filmmaker, Peter Burian, is a highly sensitive and creative artist; although he has not yet mastered the language of his media, he is set upon that course while maintaining a high

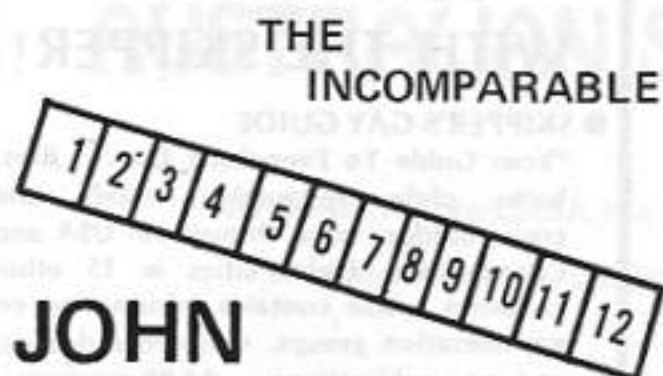
degree of artistic integrity. He has a definite style and his latest film, *That Boy*, has a powerful and consistent mood. It is more a part of the artist's growing experience than a complete and successful film. And yet the film itself, apart from the context of Peter Burian's career, is of interest.

That Boy is a lingering linear poem of love for a blind boy that is embellished with twists of surreal and romantic knots of flashback and fantasy. It is difficult to tell the concepts of beauty from those of sex. To Burian they seem to be one and near the same.

It certainly is a film that must be seen more than once to be understood (while the beauty can be appreciated easily the first time through). The abundant reliance on narration reflects an uncertainty with the visual craft but the narration can in no way be dismissed. It stands as a perfect counterpoint to the good use of visual language that is employed in the "sex" scenes. While the sex scenes writhe with an overextended obsession with foreplay the linear skeleton of the film walks simply and slowly to the narration of the poem in tribute to this blind boy. The mood thus pulsates from physical beauty and frustration to platonic beauty and simple satisfaction. The effect is not perfectly developed but it is there and it is powerfully strange.

Much of *That Boy's* magnificence must be credited to the cinematographer, Ignatio Rutkowski. And yet, while the photographed images themselves are exquisite (with a few exceptions of some exterior natural light scenes), it is the balance of the staging that brings magic to the fantasy/flashback sequences. Burian's use of composition and sense of timing in the subtle movements of his actors underlines the strange personal sensitivity of his art. It is especially his use of mirrors and cloth, silk and leather, that will be felt in the memory of audiences.

Peter Burian comes now into the field of pornography, perhaps naively, like a boy child magician sweeping long capes behind him that drag a little on the floor waiting for his manhood. But with his youthful naivete his capes can sweep away much of the silliness that now predominates the porno field and leave in their stead beautiful images of poetic insight. —DAVID MINTON



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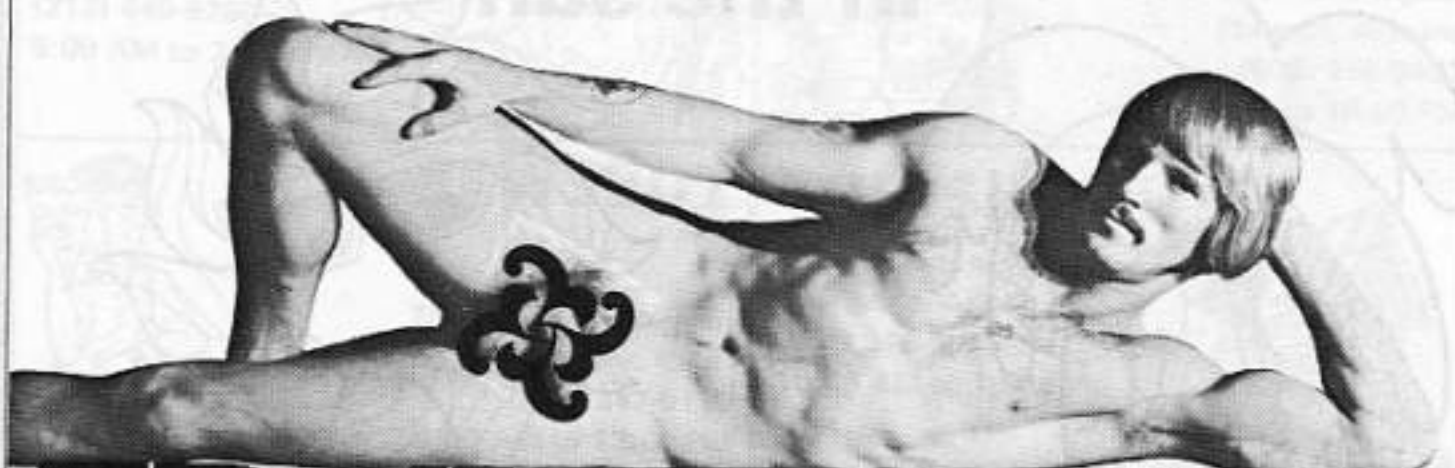
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theatre

Main Street flophouse this very minute and find more there in one hour than anything that transpires in this somnambulist salute to a great playwright's wastebasket. Let's face it. We all make mistakes now and then.

Dames at Sea is a love of a musical and Don Wartman and Tom Hartzog have finally come up with a smash hit for their San Diego house. They have corralled Neal Kenyon to restage and choreograph it in the style that has made it a continuous pleasure for the past half decade. But they have done far more than that. A dream cast has been assembled that literally dwarfs the previous versions and the settings and decor of the period are right on the button. The authenticity and the restraint from hardcore mugging is the ploy to the unalloyed joy. What's more, Johnny Downs has lived and danced his way all through this era. For him, at least, the satire has the sturdy ring of reality. Strangely enough, Mr. Downs has virtually nothing to do in the thankless role of the Captain. He does a competent job on the catchy duet, "The Beguine." Aside from that, he is barely on the periphery of things. And he isn't in the first act at all. Jane Kean was born to play Mona. She's a dazzling blonde who can hold center stage with the sheer magnetism of her personality and she can sing and dance with the best of them. She is also a great clotheshorse, real dynamite in the array of svelte fashions Andre Kingsley and Angela Wren have whipped up for her. An irresistible nightclub performer in her own right, her curtain call impressions of Zsa Zsa Gabor, Bette Davis and Katharine Hepburn were priceless. Jennifer Williams as the Ruby Keeler ingenue is flawless. Every detail of her role is perfectly realized and she sings the Jim Wise score with great charm and pert distinction. Opposite her is Robert Corff who makes an ideal Dick Powell. Mr. Corff is currently the light in June Lockhart's eye and that worthy flew all the way from Texas to catch his performance. It was a flight well worthwhile as this lad is a find. He can act and dance and sing up a veritable storm. And he makes it all look so damn easy. As the soubrette,

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Joan Blondell, Dee Ann Johnston gets her best San Diego break to date. In a role tailor-made for her talents, she sails into the stratosphere in "Good Times Are Here to Stay." As Lucky, her tapping sailor boyfriend, Terry Walker is a disciplined dancer who can really execute a trim, clean routine. Nothing fuzzy about this guy's work. This team is brilliant and they walked off with the Valley Music Circus production of *Dames* in the same roles. Everything about the show is superb. George Haimsohn and Robin Miller should be justifiably proud of such genius at work on their brainchild. It all comes together to clearly spell the biggest hit the off-Broadway theatre has ever had.

My unexpurgated review of *The Death and Life of Jesse James* by Len Jenkin, directed by Jeff Bleckner for the New Theatre for Now Series in the Mark Taper Forum, will probably never see the light of day in this magazine, unedited. Why, then, must we be subjected to it in a theatre?

Here is an example of one of the major monologues delivered early in the play:

"Groping for the honest dirt of toil, I reached down into my pockets and found my prick. I began to stroke my rod and I shot my seed into the air. It landed with a quiet flup and a golden sprout sprang from that very spot and began to quiver. It was a great cross of gold."

After this the knee-slapping expressions come fast and furious.

Jesse James: "We do this one last job in Northfield and we eat and fuck and shit till we die."

Taking Jesse at his word, one of his gang unceremoniously drops his pants, squats down on the stage and has his little ol' self a Jim-dandy (in pantomime).

Now, I am no prude. But, hell's bells. Is this the direction that experimental theatre is taking? If such be the case, it is in very sick shape. But *The Death and Life of Jesse James* resists any logical explanation as to how it came to be produced. At least 50 rounds of blanks are fired off at point-blank range in it. Is this supposed to be drama? Or is it to warn the audience what to expect should they nod off? And what about a barf bag for their disgust?

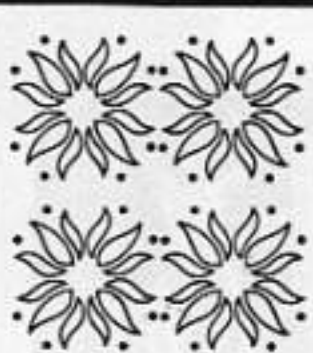
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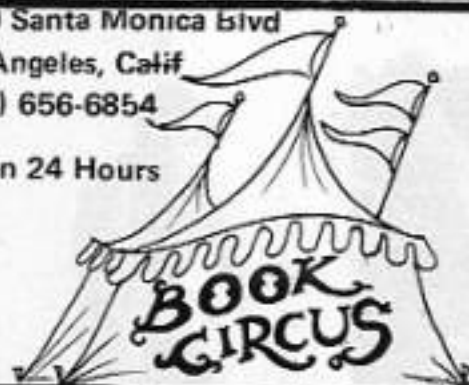
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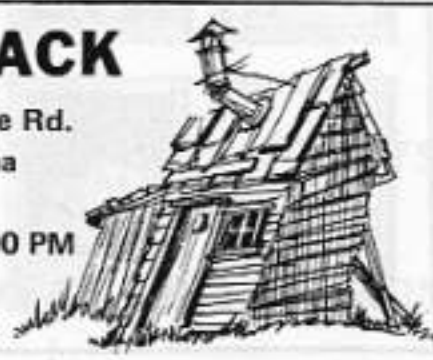


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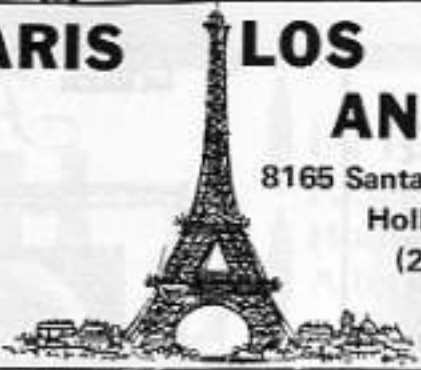
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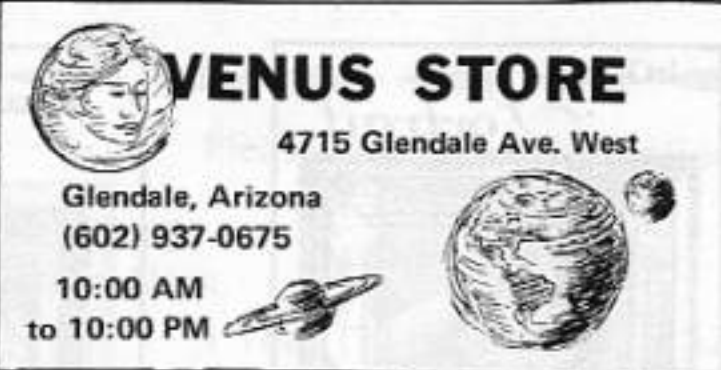
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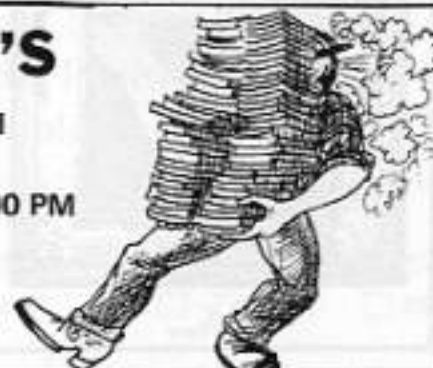
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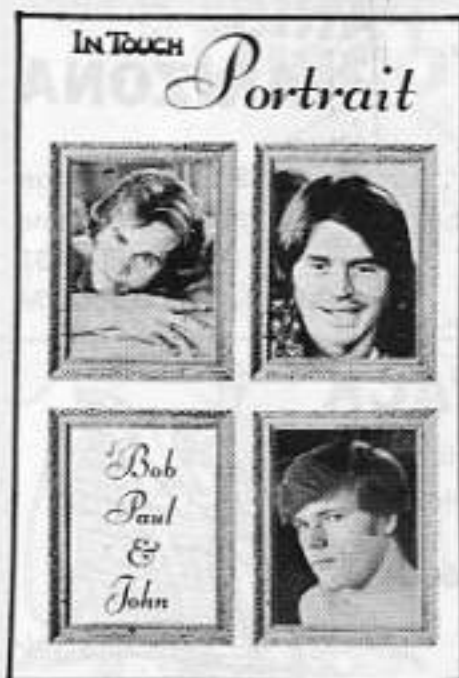
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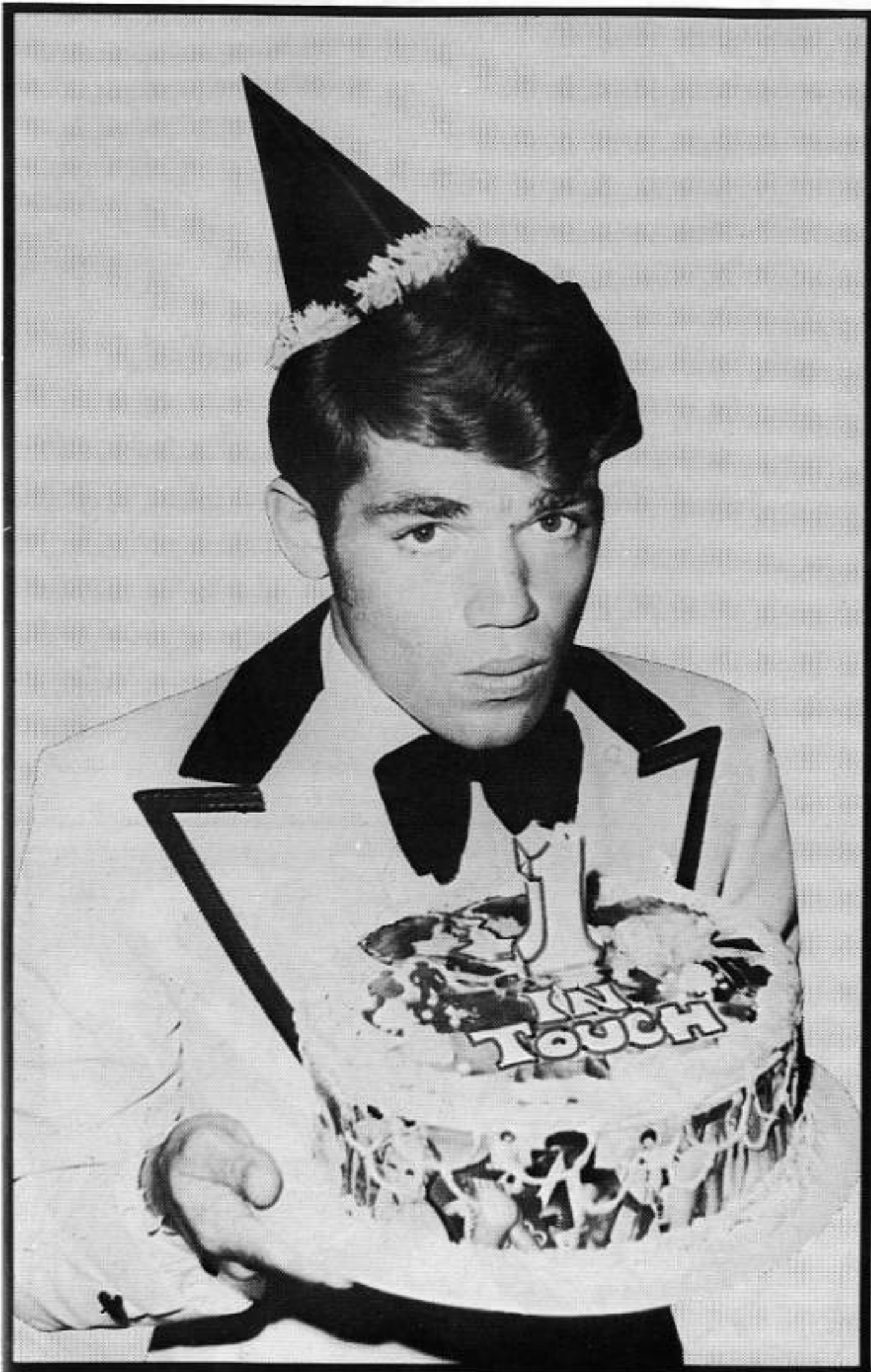
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